

**COMPETENCES NEEDED FOR INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS
STUDENTS TO BE EMPLOYED IN FINLAND**



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ABSTRACT

The labour market in Finland is challenging for most foreign nationals, notably international business students, after the completion of studies. This study examines the channels that international business students should look out for when entering the job market, keeping in mind what organizations want and the kind of skills that are needed. It aims to find out how international business students can create opportunities to be employed after graduation and to understand the importance of the connection between Finnish employers and international business students. Also, it explores the possibilities for improving international business students' competencies using available Finnish networks.

Theories from a reliable database were used for the research. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were adopted to analyse the research paradigm and constructively explore the findings. Primary data were collected through interviews and surveys, which were centred on international graduates and undergraduates. The interviews were analysed using content analysis with transcribed texts while the surveys were analysed with "Statistical Package for Social Sciences" (SPSS-24).

The results revealed both that international business students should participate in all network opportunities given as well as the university should provide extracurricular Finnish courses for them. The study suggests that tools such as talent explorer and Finnish workplace training should be utilized by graduates to create opportunities and work for themselves and apply to more medium-sized companies by making themselves relevant.

Keywords Competence development, Human Resource, employment, international, opportunity.

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1 INTRODUCTION

The goal of this thesis is to unearth the difficulties that International Business Students in Finland (foreign students) go through before and after graduating from school in finding suitable organizations for which to work. In a competitive job-seekers environment, employers often look beyond what has been achieved in school and the capability of the graduate in contributing to the organization's success (what can be offered) in order to reach a hiring decision.

Is there something employers are looking for that applicants are lacking? This thesis argues that matters of employment are not just in the hands of employers looking at the skills and competence of the candidate. The decisive moment also lies in the candidate's domain as to what to do as an added value for the application.

The thesis focuses on the channels that international business students' have to look out for when looking at the job market as to what organizations want and the kind of skills that are needed. It takes into account students' perspectives in addressing the research questions and objectives to find answers to the problems confronting students after graduation when getting a job in their respective fields of study.

This will help students to identify potential areas that need to be improved on through further self-development, mainly by acquiring skills or through professional training.

1.1 Background of the study

The labour market in Finland is challenging for most foreign nationals, especially international business students, after the completion of studies. It is tough for graduates to find a job in their field of studies even though they are willing to stay and contribute in diverse ways to the economy of the country. In order to break into the labour market, international business students ought to create opportunities and competences that will connect them with employers and professionals who are prepared to hire people with skills.

A recent report by European Employment Services (EURES) on the demographics of the Finnish labour market indicates that the size of the country's working-age population will diminish in the coming years because of an expanding pace of retirement. Simultaneously, the quantity of foreigners is increasing, and individuals are remaining at work longer. In 2018, the workforce was made up of just under 2.5 million workers. The

average number of unemployed individuals in 2018 was roughly 200.000 and the rate of unemployment was about 7.5%. (EURES, 2019a)

Nowadays, most employed people in Finland work in the service industry. The industries employing the most significant number of individuals are trade, transport, lodging and catering services, teaching, and health and social services. These sectors are expected to grow in the future. Small and medium-sized ventures have been the prime sources of employment for job seekers in recent times. Employers' prerequisites with respect to the workers they hire differ immensely as per the job. The absence of an appropriate labour force in Finland is frequently because of jobseekers not having adequate training, or lack of applicable work experience or professional skills. (EURES, 2019a)

According to European Union demographic indicators (2015) population growth in the coming years will be driven by developing nations, because of present fertility rates, death rates, expected duration of childbirth and in all-purpose improved well-being and sanitation conditions. Despite what might be expected, the number of deaths in Europe and low fertility rate would prompt a decrease in population which could be compensated by migration because there are not enough young people to cover the need of personnel as the older generation starts to retire.

The Europe 2020 policy has set out an objective of expanding the employment rate of the population aged 20 to 64 to at most 75% by 2020. In 2017, 217 million individuals (making 72.2% of the European Union population) were employed, which is nearly three million (or 1.1%) more than that of 2016. Figure 1 indicates the peak share that has been seen since 2002. There is yet a 2.8% gap that needs to be closed to arrive at the Europe 2020 employment target of 75%. (Eurostat, 2018)

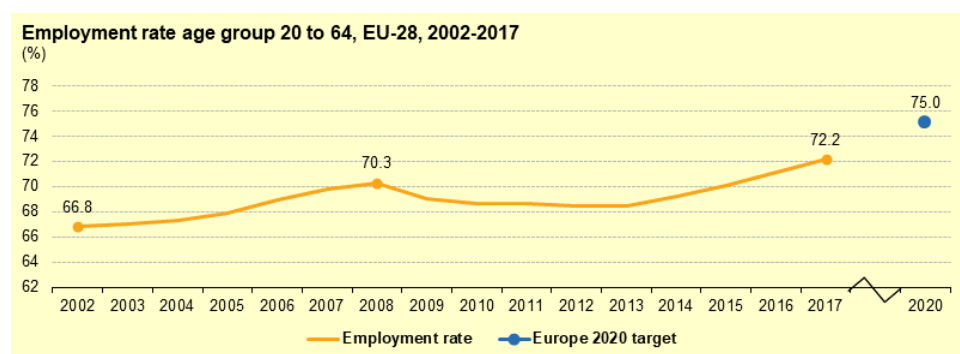


Figure 1. EU employment rate (Eurostat, 2018)

Toward the end of 2018, about 515.350 individuals lived in the Pirkanmaa region of Finland, and 9.3% of the workforce was without a job. The number of unemployed jobseekers was 22.695 of whom 57% lived in Tampere. The average work rate in 2018 was 70.6%. In the second quarter of 2018, the average number of organizations in the Pirkanmaa region was

33.400 employing roughly 160.000 individuals. (EURES, 2019b) The unemployment rate of foreign nationals began to decrease in 2017, whereas the number of individuals in employment services has risen. The point is to get foreign unemployed individuals into employment services at the earliest opportunity after the beginning of unemployment. As shown in Figure 2, the total of individuals without a job and foreigners who are in employment services was somewhat more than 2.880 in 2018. (Tableau, 2019)

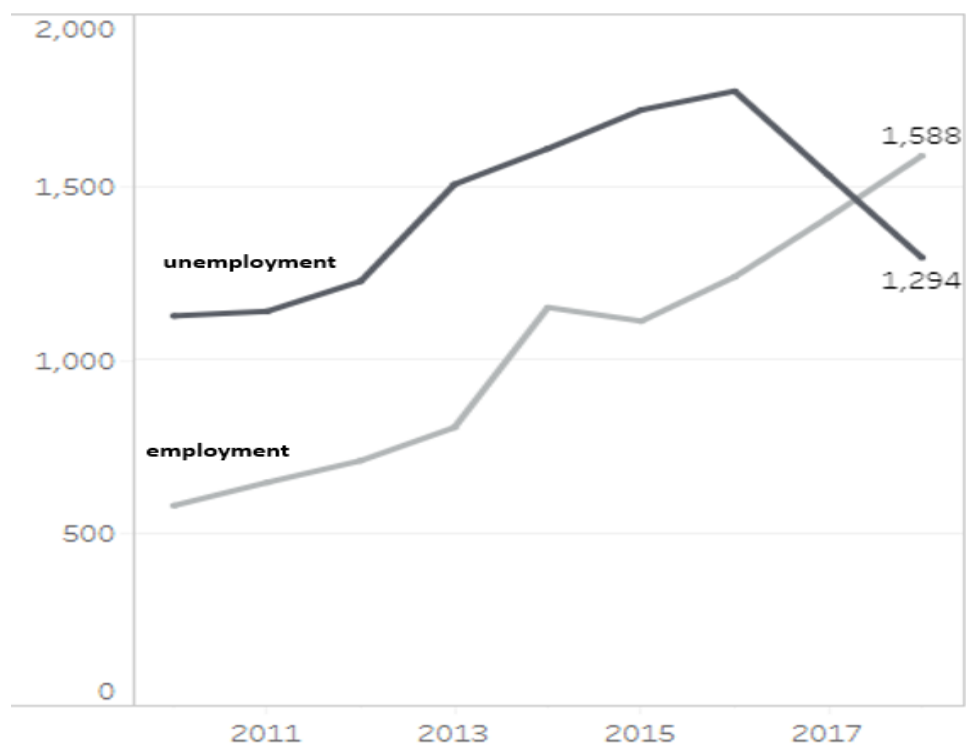


Figure 2. Number of foreign unemployed and employed services 2010-2018 (Tableau, 2019)

This study, which was commissioned by Häme University of Applied Sciences (HAMK), will suggest out methods for helping international business students find work opportunities in Finnish companies and the competencies that aid international business students in finding a job. Also, it will increase understanding of the importance of the connection between employers and international business students.

1.2 Case project

The “Go Strong” is a global competence to regional competitiveness project that aims at promoting employment through effective models. It works in collaboration with the local educational organizations in the Southern Pirkanmaa Region. The project also makes available possibilities for international students at Häme University of Applied Sciences (HAMK) in the regions of micro- and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and at the same time supports the re-establishment and internationalization of

organizations to improve on job search skills and being able to contact companies during studies. Besides this, the project will reinforce participation between training organizations and businesses. (Go Strong project, 2019)

The Go Strong project focuses mainly on the Southern Pirkanmaa region. This is the focus area of the project at the moment.

The Go Strong is a project which is funded by the European Social Fund and the basic goal of Go Strong is to increase the chances of employment of international students in the Valkeakoski region or, similarly, international people in general, however, the project is mainly focused on students. The focus groups are the international students of HAMK Valkeakoski campus and then the international students of Valkeakoski high school, which is also on the same campus, and Finnish international students who study international trade. The main goal is to increase employability but also to enhance cooperation with HAMK and the other schools and local companies, local entrepreneurs and the city of Valkeakoski. The project's aim is to make a well-working cooperation and the completion of the goals through organizing workshops for students where they can enhance their job-seeking skills etc. So far, the workshops have been about writing a good curriculum vitae (CV), recognition of students' own competencies, a LinkedIn workshop and an entrepreneurship workshop on how to become an entrepreneur in Finland. A Career Week event was organized involving local companies with which the students could network. (Tammivirta, interview 27 March 2019)

1.3 Research objectives, purpose and questions

The reasons for conducting the studies are the following:

- To investigate the competencies, that aid international business students in finding a job in Finland
- To understand the importance of the connection between Finnish employers and international business students
- To discover methods for work opportunities for international business students in Finnish companies
- To explore the possibilities for improving international business students' competence using available Finnish network

This thesis aims to find out how international business students can create opportunities in order to be employed after graduation.

The thesis seeks to find an answer to the following questions:

How can international students create for themselves opportunities and competencies in order to be employed in Finland?

In order to support the main research question, the author decided to have a sub-question, as followed:

In what way can the university create an enabling environment for International Business students to thrive?

1.4 Methods

In this study, the author used both qualitative and quantitative methods (mixed methods) to gather data through interviews and questionnaires (survey). The interviewees include four foreign graduates and one foreign undergraduate of Häme University of Applied Sciences (HAMK), whereas the survey was sent to foreign international business students who took part in the Go Strong events. The purpose of adopting this method is to help the author in analysing the thesis model so that the outcomes can be compared constructively.

1.5 Structure of the research

The structure of the research is presented as follows:

Chapter one consists of an introduction of the research topic, the background, the research questions, the purpose of the research, an outline of the research objectives, methods, and finally, the entire structure of the research. The second chapter talks about the various theories related to the research and its conclusion.

The third chapter is the empirical research, which includes approach and data collection. Chapter four involves the analysis of data based on the research questions used for interviews and surveys. Chapter five consists of recommendations for the main findings. Chapter six will conclude the whole research work.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

This chapter reviews relevant concepts centred on available literature on the subject such as books, articles, and other journals both in electronic and printed form. This chapter will also give an insight into Human Resource Management (HRM) and the abilities needed for improving chances for employment, competence development enhancing international students' competencies and the experience needed for work and skills.

2.1 Human resources management

Many organizations have a Human Resource Department, which operates by ensuring proper personnel for the organization. These departments oversee the recruitment and well-being of personnel. As indicated by Pilbeam and Corbridge (2010, p. 11) a typical subject among HRM and Traditional Personnel Management (TPM) is that TPM was related to a short-term contribution to the organization whereas HRM, which is just another term for personnel management, focused on vital issues and the HR contribution to the organization. The biggest concerns of most employers these days are discovering good workers and training them. The contrast between the skills required at work and those possessed by applicants, at times called the skills gap, is of genuine concern to human resource managers and company owners looking to employ competent staff. Though managers might prefer to employ individuals who are trained and prepared to get down to business, they may usually be prepared to offer specialized job-specific training required for those lacking such abilities. (Robinson, 2000, p. 1)

Armstrong and Taylor (2014, p. 5) expressed that the primary objectives of HRM are first, to help the organization in accomplishing its targets by creating and actualizing human resource techniques that are incorporated into the business strategy. Secondly, its objectives are to contribute to the growth of a high-performance culture. Thirdly, is to ensure that the organization has skilled people who are talented and employs people it needs. Lastly, is to create a positive employment affiliation among the executives and workers and an atmosphere of common trust. Pilbeam and Corbridge (2010, p. 155) stated that effective human resource planning can forestall human resource gaps and can enhance recruiting appropriate individuals to deliver the organization's objectives. The recruitment and selection process is a coordinated activity among candidates and jobs, which is reliant, first, on the organization plainly characterizing and indicating a need; second, on utilizing the appropriate recruitment strategies and selection methods successfully; and, third, on reviewing, assessing and adjusting the recruitment and selection scheme in the light of know-how.

Present business settings have become very dynamic, and graduates from college ought to be able to compete with professional qualification holders with competencies who are preferred by recruiters (employers) over fresh graduates in the job market. For that reason, there is a need to coordinate the skills of college graduates with the requirements of the business if they are to be effective in the job market. (Weligamage, 2009, p. 119) In recruitment processes, Human Resource Managers consider candidates who have work-related experience with skills than those without any experience. However, if these professionals are not available, employers turn to hire graduates with good competencies who are ready to fit into the organizations' settings. Hence, it would be advisable for colleges to include more opportunities to incorporate classroom directives with the actual working environment, which will, in turn, help students in securing jobs. (Weligamage, 2009, p. 119)

Human Resource Management is the engagement of people to occupy particular job positions, in an organization and leading them through processes in order to contribute to the purpose of the organization, as well as seeing to their welfare and remunerating them (Rao, 2010, p. 2). Torrington, Hall, Atkinson, and Taylor (2017, p. 7-8) point out that HRM came into existence as a result of personnel management which involves a particular ideology towards completing human activities in the best interest of the organization in the current business world more efficiently than the traditional personnel management. However, this can only be achieved through appropriate organizational structures by identifying the types of contracts to offer employees based on their expertise and developing attractive packages for them.

According to Armstrong and Taylor (2014, p. 1) HRM is an extensive and rational way of developing and employing people. It can also be viewed as a theory about how people should be managed, which is supported by several theories relating to the conduct of people and organizations. It is concerned with the contribution it can make to improving organizational viability through people ought to be, similarly bothered about the moral dimension. Again, HRM includes the use of approaches and practices in the areas of organization layout and improvement, personnel resourcing, learning, and growth, as well as the provision of services that will enhance the well-being of personnel.

2.1.1 Recruitment processes

The criteria and competence required for recruiting candidates, especially international candidates, has changed over the last decades. Organizations have redesigned their recruitment processes to attract the right candidates based on the kind of competencies and innovative skills the new employees will bring to the organization. According to Pilbeam and Corbridge (2010, p. 155) recruitment and selection of candidates are vital

to the running of an organization, and there are convincing explanations for getting it right. Good recruitment and selection are significant because, well-considered, agreed and communicated strategies, techniques and practices can essentially add to successful organizational performance. Hence, ineffectiveness in recruitment processes may lead to poor work execution, which may result in internal conflict, inappropriate working conduct, low working morale, and low labour turnover.

Recruitment involves the identification of possible resources through screening and shortlisting of applicants to fill up an available position in an organization which is part of the core mandate of HRM. It does not only end there, but also ensures that the right people are chosen for the required positions and at the right time and is cost-effective. (Tutorialspoint, n.d.) According to McKenna and Beech (2008, p. 178) recruitment is where an organization opens up vacant position(s) in attracting a pool of candidates to select the best of them.

Nevertheless, Rao (2010) defined recruitment as the procedure of discovering the sources of labour to meet the requisite staffing plan, to utilize and to employ effective measures in order to attract a labour pool in adequate numbers to facilitate successful selection of an effective workforce. Pilbeam and Corbridge (2010, p. 156) indicated that recruitment is a procedure that intends to attract appropriate applicants for a specific position from which it is conceivable and practical to choose and select competent candidates.

2.1.2 Types of recruitment

Recruitment is an essential part of many organizations for developing and sustaining an efficient team. Sources of recruitment in an organization can come either internally or externally. Internal sources of recruitment are where employees are hired from within the organization, especially those who searching for a different position. Internal sources of recruitment include employee referrals, promotions, transfers, recruiting former employees, and job posting. External sources of recruitment include direct recruitment, campus recruitment, professional associations, employment agencies, and media advertising. (Tutorialspoint, n.d.) The figure below shows the classification of sources of recruitment.

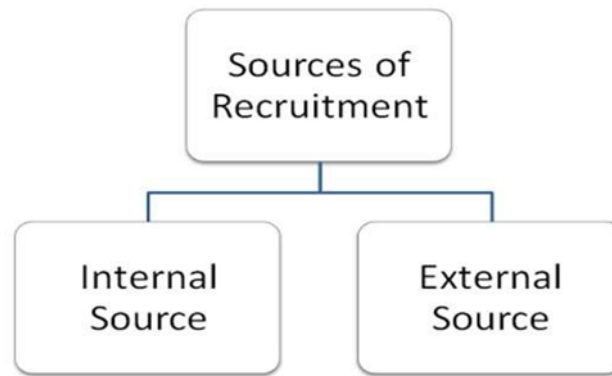


Figure 3. Sources of recruitment (Tutorialspoint, n.d.)

According to Friend (2017) many organizations utilize a number of channels in recruitment processes such as internally, externally or an inner preferment selection. The internal part is where a vacant position is posted on the organization's intranet or common areas within the departments for interested employees to apply for and usually requires similar procedures for as an external applicant. However, external recruitment is where the vacant position is posted through newspapers, the organization's webpage, and on other platforms.

2.2 Competence development enhancing international business students

To start with, one could ask why international business students need competence in order to be employed or to secure a job in their field of studies. Currently, most organizations look out for various skills in addition to the qualification and what the applicant can offer on the job when assigned a specific task to execute. Nonetheless, competence cannot be overlooked even if the applicant has the best qualification. In this case, Ellstrom and Kock (2008, p. 6) stated that a specific occupation might require capabilities that do not relate to the genuine abilities of the individual. Consequently, the idea of competency centres around abilities that, for some reason, are respected by an internal and external job market, that is, skills that have trade value.

According to Pilbeam and Corbridge (2010, p. 62 & 68) competence is the characteristics of a person which is associated with the successful or predominant execution of a task or the capacity to perform exercises within an occupation to a recommended standard. It is also the application of knowledge using practical and thinking skills to accomplish effective execution to the standard required in the job field. Ricketts and Ricketts (2011, p. 604) also claimed that competence is the ability to execute something very well without flaws.

Supporting the findings of Ricketts and Ricketts (2011, p. 604) the author has deduced a framework of the usage of competence on the job. Figure 4 shows how an individual might have competence in expressing and using

a particular skill, for example, language. Moreover, the individual must be able to have theoretical knowledge to that as well as having the ability to apply the competence in practice, and the attitude/motivation towards it during work.

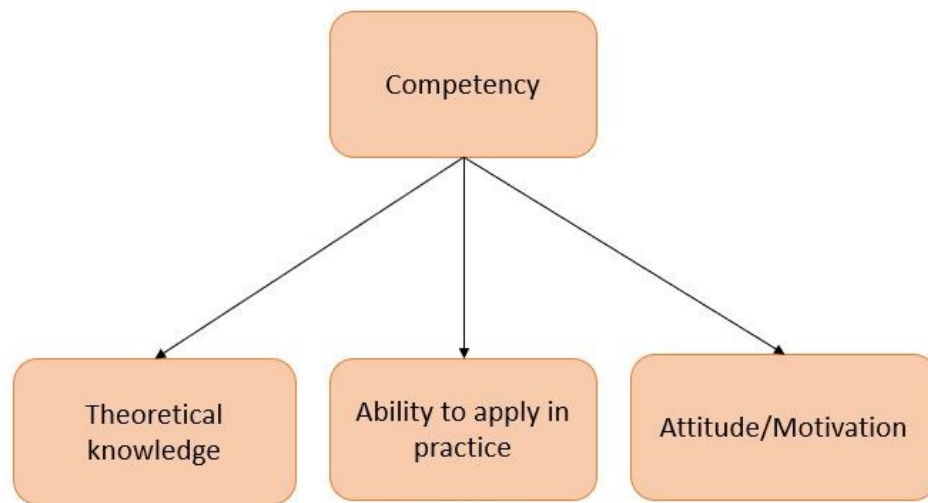


Figure 4. The usage of competence on job

2.2.1 Competence development

Competence is a particular set of attributes that a person must possess in order to demonstrate those attributes in the performance of certain tasks, especially on the job. Competence is where someone can perform activities within an obligation that is expected in employment standards (McKenna & Beech, 2008, p. 182). On the one hand, Pelsmaekers, Rollo, Hout & Heynderickx (2011, p. 2) defines competence development as the skills that are important for a person or an individual to reach a specific aim which comes with assessable knowledge to carry out an activity within a clear-cut job context. On the other hand, Ellstrom & Kock (2008, p. 7) point out that competence development involves different procedures that can be applied to impact the supply of competence that is required by the internal work market in an individual worker, a group of personnel or the entire personnel group.

Competency frameworks are usually based either on the 'behavioural' model, where skills are communicated as the practices that people need to show their competency, and the 'minimum standards' model, assessing the capability to perform activities within an occupation to an accepted standard (Pilbeam and Corbridge, p. 62).

The author used a competency framework in Figures 5 and 6 to show how skills, such as "technical skills, business skills, people skills and leadership skills" which were categorized by Amato (2015) revolve around digital skills as an enabler for which they have become a necessity for digital skills. The

framework is supported by the requirement of objectivity, uprightness, and moral conduct and incorporates a consistent obligation to developing competence and gaining new aptitudes and knowledge on the job. (CGMA, 2019)

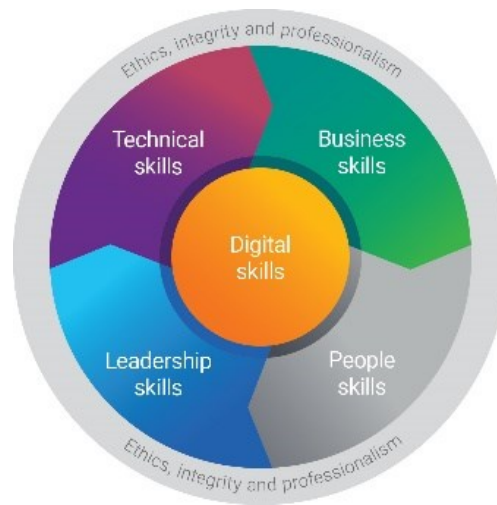


Figure 5. Competency framework with digital skills as an enabler (CGMA, 2019)

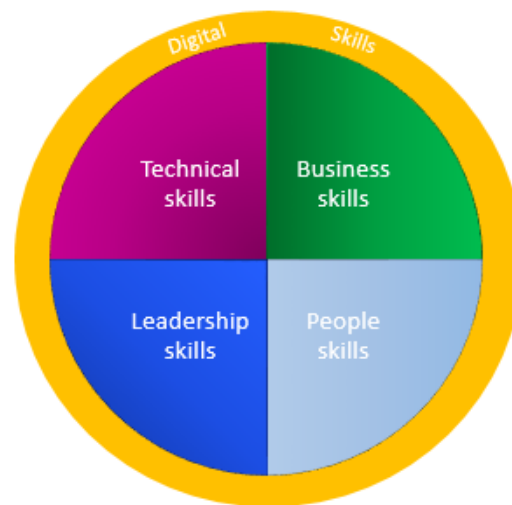


Figure 6. Competency framework with digital skills as a necessity

Based on the framework shown in Figure 5, the author has created a specific competency framework (Figure 6), which highlights that digital skills have become a necessity. The reason is that most businesses use automated systems in running their day-to-day activities and without it, dealings with customers and partners will be complicated and cannot cope with the competitive environment as other competitors will take advantage of their customers. Although businesses do not overlook skills such as technical skills, leadership skills, and people skills, digital skills have become a necessity which will be required from every candidate who wants to work for such businesses.

2.2.2 Adaptation to culture

Adapting to the culture of a country is the first and foremost skills that an international or a foreign student must acquire in order to thrive in that country. Learning and having knowledge about the way of life of the people makes life somewhat easier than if there is no knowledge. The skills that are learned from the culture are exhibited in different organizations in the said country in addition to the culture of the organization.

Culture, in general, is a set of common connotations that make it feasible for individuals from a group to translate and act upon their surroundings. These common suppositions and understandings lie beneath the cognizant dimension for people and are revealed through stories, distinctive language, artefacts and standards that rise out of individual and organizational conduct. (Valmohammadi & Roshanzamir, 2015, p. 168) Culture is the aggregate programming of the mind that recognizes individuals from one other. It is dependably a collective phenomenon but can be associated with diverse groups (Hofstede, 2011, p. 3). Locker and Kaczmarek (2014, p. 40) affirm that culture is individuals understanding about beliefs and what is acceptable in a group towards a course of directions which provides the patterns of standard behaviour.

However, culture does not only have an influence on people, but it also influences every single aspect of communication in business, for example, in how to be polite and show respect, how to motivate people, how to talk, and the kind of information to give out. Nevertheless, business communication is also affected by organizational culture as well as affiliation skills, for example, gender, social class, race, and ethnicity, etc. (Locker and Kaczmarek, 2014, p. 40)

Kehoe (2011, p. 9) noted that one of the ways humans have come to comprehend the key values of the society is through comparison of a person's societal values to others. Two culture dimensions were compared, and the first is values which tend to focus on how individuals are affected by events through actions specifically, the United States of America (USA) as an individualistic culture as well as Britain and many other European countries where emphases are placed on individual achievements rather than collectivism. In contrast, many Asian societies are concerned with collectivism by focusing on family, community, and individual responsibility, thereby measuring success to the entire group although it was an individual contribution.

The second dimension focuses on the norms of appropriate manner where cultures require different degrees of both physical and psychological closeness in order to be efficient as a group. Being able to adjust to the culture of a country, helps in becoming part of the society, specifically in a highly expressive culture where the language is essential in securing a job. (Kehoe, 2011, p. 9)

Another factor when it comes to cultural adaptation is language skills. Learning the language in the country that you live, helps in adapting to the people and makes job searching easier especially if language skills are part of a requirement needed in order to be employed in an organization.

2.2.3 Knowledge of organizational culture

It is important for a person or an applicant to know and understand a little bit about an organization before thinking of working in such an organization. Having knowledge about the organization makes it easy to know the kinds of operations it undertakes and the culture system. There are differences in Organizational Culture (OC) depending on the type and size of the organization. For example, the culture of an Information Technology firm may differ from that of a Marketing or an Accounting firm which makes them unique in different ways notwithstanding the underlying cultural similarities that exist in each of the organization. Pilbeam and Corbridge (2010, p. 14) emphasized that organizational culture is the glue which holds together the present-day practice of human resource management and in this manner needs to be effectively managed so that employee interests can easily be identified with those of the organization. Whereas corporate culture and its related values can be anticipated by human resource managers, the sustainability of the organizational culture is through the groups and individuals who are working in the organization.

Schein (2010, p. 73) points out that every group and organization faces two issues which are, to survive internally and adapt to the external environment, and to integrate the internal procedures to ensure the ability to continue to survive and adapt to changes. Roughton, Crutchfield, and Waite (2019, p. 35) affirmed that an organization, regardless of whether public or private, big, or small, is constantly changing in accordance with its condition to meet internal and external pressures as well as demands. According to Robbins and Judge (2017, p. 564) each organization has a culture that can influence the behaviour and attitudes of its members significantly depending on the strength of the organization, regardless of whether that effect is difficult to measure correctly.

An organization is often portrayed by its characteristics, which can be associated with its operations. It has a place with the organization's assets distinguished as uncommon, durable, non-tradable, and imitable that can only be practice by its members (Beugelsdijk, Koen & Noorderhaven, 2006, p. 835). Even though it is difficult to give a precise definition of an organizations' culture, a characteristic of an organization such as engineering companies' and financial institutions' outfits depicts the culture that exists in such organizations. The vast differences in culture may be noticed by the members' dress code. Moreover, organizational culture depends upon the feeling of various individuals communicating

with one another to accomplish some objective in their characterized environment. It is also a set of structures, schedules, principles, and standards that direct and compels conduct. It is the combined programming of the mind which recognizes the individual from one organization from individuals of another. (Valmohammadi & Roshanzamir, 2015, p. 168)

According to Seyedyousefi, Fard, and Tohidi (2016, p. 412) in this current world, organizational know-how is becoming a key competitive gain in organizations. Supporting and understanding management creates a favourable situation for any organization that helps not only to live in a complex, competitive environment but additionally can give that organization an advantage over others in the field. Organizational knowledge in our fast-changing world is an asset for those who know and oversee it. However, there is a high risk to companies that show no concern for environmental changes or those that do not have any knowledge about it. Despite the high volume of data and know-how in organizations, just as the utilization of new data and correspondence innovations, adequate data is not always accessible for candidates.

Seyedyousefi et al. (2016, p. 414) defined organizational culture as the primary substance of attitudes and values of an organization which reflect in workers and their general performance of their duties. Therefore, common organizational cultural identity that exists among the members through values, beliefs, and norms will lead to internal commitment towards achieving the goals of the organization. In addition, Flamholtz and Randle (2011, p. 29) said that organizational culture is very important because it portrays the organization to the environment it operates which is of utmost good for potential applicants who want to work with the company. They can see the core values of the organization and what it stands for. Organizational culture can also be seen as a pillar to an organization and has an impact on performance in order to achieve organizational objectives.

Additionally, Robbins and Judge (2017, p. 565) refer to organizational culture as a system of shared importance held by individuals who recognize the organization from other organizations. They, therefore, cited seven attributes that capture the embodiment of an organization's culture, to which both management and employees have to adhere. First, is the degree to which workers are urged to be creative and to take risks; second, is the degree to which workers are relied upon to show exactness in analysis, and thoughtfulness concerning details of work done; third, is the degree to which management centres on outcomes instead of on the strategies and procedures used to accomplish them; fourth, is how management decisions contemplate the impact of results on individuals within the organization; fifth, is how much work activities are organized around teams instead of individuals; sixth, is the degree to which individuals are forceful and focused instead of easy-going; and, seventh, is

the degree to which the activities of the organization maintain the status quo as opposed to lead to development.

Teegarden, Hinden, and Sturm (2011, p. 69) claimed that the central idea of organizational culture emerges the moment an organization is formed, and genuinely lives in the unconscious aspects of all organizations. They emphasize that the theory is hardly tangible and only becomes substantial through the way individuals in an organization understand it and act on it according to their beliefs. Members of shared culture relate to one another through mutual understanding and operate together as one body. Organizational culture, therefore, defines the core objectives of the organization touching everyone in the organization, and affects the way they identify with each other and to a different organization, approaches to work, how programs are conducted, and what are acceptable objectives in daily practices.

However, in many companies, HR might see that the applicants have the right competence but might want to hire someone who has a cultural background relating to that of the organization. Time management, punctuality, etc. is seen as one of the areas in considering applicants' curriculum vitae. Some companies might not be willing to be multicultural in comparison with other companies. Religion also plays a part in many companies as they would not know how they can relate with other employees. It would be prudent on the part of the applicants to be in a proper outfit when attending the interview. Having knowledge about the company, and asking the right questions are also very important.

2.3 Working experience and skills

In this chapter, the author will talk about the most important skills that students should have in order to be employed (personal branding). There are other researches that talk about skills and experiences that applicants need in various working fields to develop themselves, such as summer jobs, internships, students training and part-time jobs. These can help individuals improve in the areas of communication skills, working in teams and being proactive.

Lowden, Hall, Elliot, and Lewin (2011, p. 4) claimed that most employers are looking for proactive graduates who can analyse as well as use higher-level skills and a multi-dimensional communication to expedite innovative teamwork to transform the direction of their organisation. Weligamage (2009, p. 123) stated that in today's business environment there is an emphasis on the importance of education in employability and a concentration on the development of significant skills and work experience. To augment graduate employability, there needs to be a theoretical background to undergraduate development practice.

Technology is continuously improving, which has influenced most organizations to use state-of-the-art equipment to be able to contest with other competitors as well as satisfying customers' needs. These current developments are changing the structures of the workplace too, so employees must have special skills in addition to their academic and technical skills in order to keep up and succeed in the working environment. However, International business students must have skills that employers are looking for, skills such as interpersonal skills, good work ethics, teamwork skills, and communication skills, in order for them to be valuable to the company. (Ricketts and Ricketts, 2011, p. 596)

Summer jobs, internships, student training, and part-time jobs are mostly used as a gateway by most undergraduates and graduates to gain experience and as channels in creating opportunities for employment. Most companies prefer to employ people who have worked in the company before because such people are already familiar with the codes and conducts of the organisation and have some level of experience of how to carry out tasks given to them either by their superiors or individually.

2.3.1 Personal branding

Personal branding is the practice whereby a person manages his or her status, style, attitude, appearance, and skills to develop career-oriented goals in order to achieve a future objective (Wright, 2013, p. 6). Khedher (2014, p. 30) characterized personal branding as a diverse exercise embraced by people to make themselves known in the marketplace with the goal of getting employment. Shepherd (2005, p. 1) on the other hand, stated that personal branding entails those diverse activities carried out by people to make themselves known in the business circle. Personal branding is most obviously found in the support given via career experts in educational institutions for former students searching for a job or preparing for a career, as it is part of the activities of various employment agencies.

According to Karaduma (2013, p. 466) the expression "personal branding" and "self-branding" have been criticized by a minority of individuals who do not accept that humans can be called a brand. Yet, within the individual branding movement, individuals and their professions are advertised as brands with the guarantee of performing successfully. Moreover, the business world is starting to perceive the significance of controlling personal brands and offering tactical guidance about how to extend an ideal individual personal brand identity into organizational settings. Hence, candidates have to build on their personal brand in order to project the image of the targeted organizations which they want to work for since employers may be willing to hire people with such characteristics.

2.3.2 Employability skills

Discussions regarding today's workforce often focus on skills needed by job seekers in order to be employed. Finding readily available workers with employability skills to fit into a company set-up and remain in the working environment has become a major problem. In today's competitive working world, employers are looking out for dependable and responsible workers who can take care of issues and who have the social competence and attitude to cooperate with different workers. Therefore, workers with these skills are highly needed because organizations view them as profitable human capital assets. (Robinson, 2000, p. 1)

According to Robinson (2000, p. 1) employability skills are the basic skills that are needed to get, maintain, and do well on a job. These skills, attitudes, and actions allow workers to come to terms with their co-workers and superiors in order to make sound and critical decisions. In contrast to technical skills, employability skills are non-specific in nature rather than job-specific and cut across overall organizational types and work levels from the bottom to the managerial level.

Ricketts and Ricketts (2011, p. 596) stated that employability skills are the necessary skills an individual must possess in acquiring, keeping, and performing well on a job. Although academic skills and technical skills are worth mentioning, employers these days look out for people who are good, honest, and hardworking and have positive attitudes. Developing the attributes and skills most needed by employers helps an individual to be successful in the job. Lowden et al. (2011, p. 4) stated that employability is a set of attainments, aptitudes, understandings and individual traits that enable graduates to be more successful in getting a job in their chosen fields, which benefits themselves, the workforce, the society, and the economy as a whole. Bridgstock (2009, p. 23-33) believes that employability skills are the qualities and abilities which an individual must possess to meet the changing needs of customers and employers. Hence, Weligamage (2009, 117) suggested that employability skills are not only needed for successful employment, they are also needed in order to achieve one's potential and contribute effectively to the organizations' strategic directions.

Therefore, the concept of employability takes into account factors such as accomplishments, competencies, disposition, and social-economic backgrounds, which is mostly considered by the private sector in selecting candidates when making decisions. International business students would, therefore, have an obligation to choose and connect with the employability development openings provided by their Higher Education Institutions (HEI) and additionally can utilize their extracurricular experience to augment their skills. (Weligamage, 2009, p. 120) The magic bullet model below shows how employability skills can be implemented into Higher Education Institutions' (HEI) academic programs, where

students are employed as a result of having been involved in the process to develop themselves and find out skills required while creating opportunities.

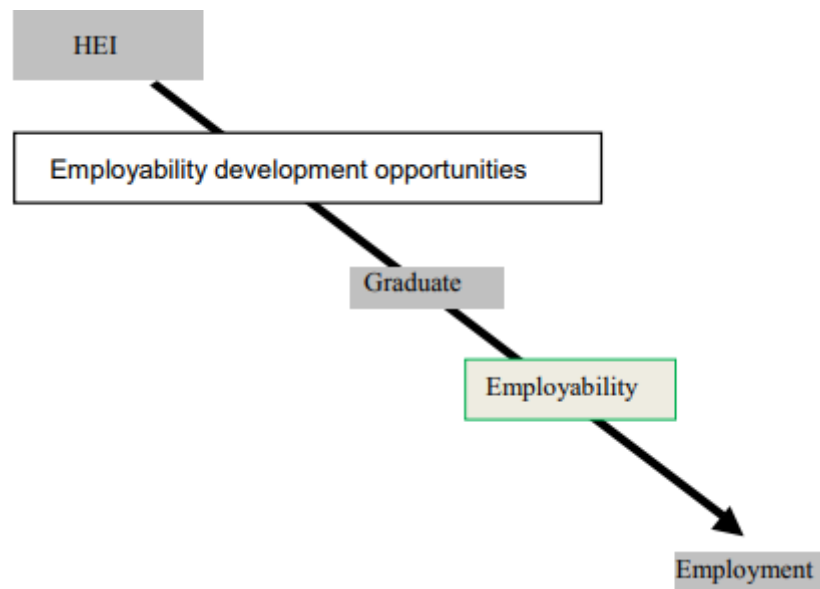


Figure 7. Model of Employability (Weligamage, 2009, p.120)

According to Robinson (2000, p. 2) although the prerequisite academic skills for some entry-level jobs may be low, fundamental scholarly aptitudes are still necessary for high work performance. Preferably, new employees will have the capacity and willingness to learn. Also, they need the ability to listen to and read guidelines in order to carry out those guidelines. These individuals ought to have the capacity to respond appropriately to the information when asked. Possibly having excellent higher-order thinking skills is more significant to work accomplishment than having unique necessary academic qualifications. The ability to deliberate, reason, and make sound judgements is vital for workers wishing to advance their careers. Moreover, employers are profoundly concerned with personal skills because, in most jobs, it is very challenging to utilize workers adequately who lack individual skills. In any case, entry-level employees with unique skills believe in themselves and relate with others genuinely and straightforwardly, showing regard for themselves, their associates, and their supervisors irrespective of other working-class diversity and individual differences. Furthermore, they consider themselves as part of a team and are prepared to work within the culture of the group.

2.3.3 Communication skills

Barker (2010, p. 1) defines communication as the act of sending and receiving information, either verbal or nonverbal, in a meaningful manner. Ricketts and Ricketts (2011, p. 174 & 175) on the other hand, defined communication as the means of sending and receiving messages through

which at least two individuals come to a consensus. Communication is the skill that we need the most at work, yet, is the skill that is generally lacking. Furthermore, communication is essential for success in business in the sense that most business meetings begin with an introductory address through communication, which must relay an understandable message to other parties involved. How well we communicate determines how successful we are in school, in the work environment, and how we associate with others. Thus, three primary roles or objectives of communication are to inform, to impact, and to express emotions.

According to Casselbury (2019) communication, in general, plays an essential role in the day-to-day activity of in an individual's personal development in an effective manner. Therefore, working to develop communication skills with people and in a group helps the team and boosts an individual's own morale in approaching people and handling a task especially in companies that deal with customer services (service providing companies). In other words, Ellis (2009, p. 10) states that being able to communicate effectively is very important to all careers and personal development and without adequate communication skills, there will be less personal development in reaching a goal, for instance, when planning to develop a personal career as an entrepreneur. In this case, communication skills are vital in augmenting client bases. Most employers consider effective communication skills when hiring candidates in their organizations. Ricketts and Ricketts (2011, p. 117) also expressed that verbal eloquence is the leading indicator of promotion within an organization. It is additionally a noteworthy indicator of accomplishment throughout everyday life. Subsequently, if a person's communication competence is incredible, the person will be seen as extraordinarily astute and be able to handle tasks especially when handling clients and during business meetings (essential for success in business).

Jacobson (2009, p. 9) explained that an absence of practical communication skills tends to hinder the progress of an individual in connecting with people and finding ways to adjust in society. Understanding how to engage people brings vast experience to the table whereby communication becomes easy in job interviews and working in teams. In this case, communication was defined as the procedure of passing on information and exchanging ideas either by verbal or nonverbal means, which must be clear to each party involved. Communication skills can be improved through conversations by creating shared meaning, building relationships with people through daily activities, sharing information, and promoting ideas through interviews, in presentations, networking, and in written documents (Barker, 2010, p. 19).

The contextual model of communication pattern proposes three significant ideologies. First and foremost, it suggests that in order for communication to be effective among parties involved, there should be a continuous process of communicating skills with a clear understanding. Secondly,

communication is complicated due to the understanding of the message which has been communicated and not just the words someone speaks but also gestures, specifically in verbal communication. Lastly, communication becomes contextual because it never happens in isolation, its meaning is affected by different contexts such as psychological, relational, situational, environmental, and cultural. (Barker, 2010, p. 9 & 10) The figure below shows the contextual model of communication.

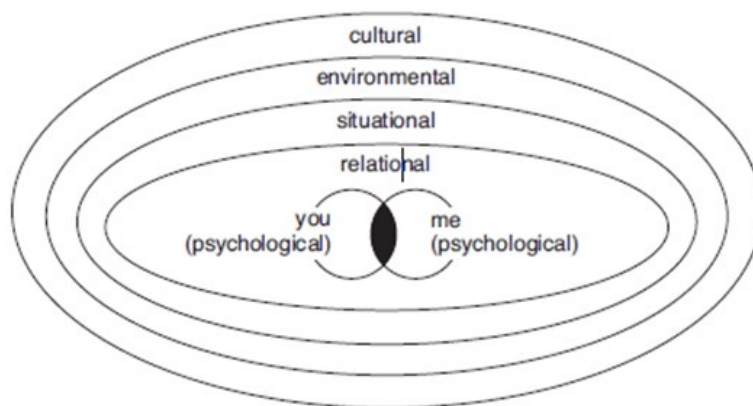


Figure 8. A Contextual model of communication (Barker, 2010, p. 11)

Communication skills are significant in all career modalities. It is of the utmost importance to have solid communication abilities because it enables a person to communicate effectively with people from different cultures and background. Communication skills are needed by and large, particularly in the work world. Communicating effectively during job interviews is pivotal in securing a job. The aptitude exhibited at the interview can persuade the recruiter(s) on how best a candidate can manage circumstances when working with other people and can fit into the company's objectives, most specifically during teamwork. (Ferguson, 2009, p. 83-84)

Kehoe (2011, p. 40) proposed a communication model with the assumption that the foremost fundamental goal of all communication is connecting with others. In building constructive communication skills in an organization, it is essential to make an excellent interpersonal relationship with others. Secondly, is to connect and control talking in order to reach better understanding, especially when working in teams. Lastly, is to know how to dialogue with people by upholding connections in the face of dissimilarities and disagreement. Based on Kehoe's model, the author has developed a model of human communication in this context (Figure 9).

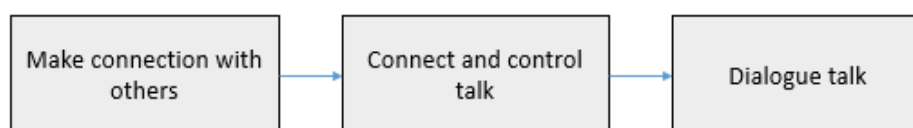


Figure 9. Model of human communication related to competence towards employment

In the author's view, one of the most vital skills that a person can possess is communication skills. In order to be successful, being able to communicate efficiently helps in task management in a project which often requires teamwork.

2.3.4 Teamwork skills

Ricketts and Ricketts (2011, p. 602) asserted that teamwork skills enable an individual to work viably and proficiently within a group, which includes organizing, planning, listening, sharing, flexibility, and leadership. Ferguson (2009, p. 115) defined teamwork as the ability to cooperate towards a collective view. It is also the ability to coordinate individual achievements towards the company's goals. Locker and Kaczmarek (2014, p. 297) expressed that cooperation is essential to organizational performance as teams are formed to perform various tasks on projects which then requires individual skills in contributing to the entire group. Organizations are often useful when they expressly adopt standard procedures most explicitly in problem-solving groups.

A team is a group of people, each with diverse skills and high-quality obligations, who work collectively by bringing their competence on board with mutual support. Teams are the collection of individuals that must depend upon group collaboration if each member is to experience optimal success and to accomplish the purpose of the group. Teamwork is managed, planned, and systematically coordinates effort towards a shared objective, to achieve the shared goal in a meaningful way. Teamwork is managed because somebody exercises control, whether officially or informally. Teamwork is planned since it results from planning and organizing. In the working environment, teams are organized so that individuals' gifts and abilities can be guided through group effort to the achievement of central assignments and objectives. (Ricketts and Ricketts, 2011, p. 162)

Most companies depend on teamwork for creating and selling new products. They do this by bringing employees from different departments as a team to operate in a single area of the company. These cross-functional teams can develop a product quicker and cheaper than the segmented ones. Having teamwork skills helps in contributing to the company's goals. (Ferguson, 2009, p.116)

Ricketts and Ricketts (2011, p. 598) asserted that for a person to succeed in a group, the person in question must fit within the group, be proactive, follow rules and values, accept people with different views and backgrounds, express ideas to other team members, be sensitive, and work well with a group of workers who set out to achieve comparable objectives. In short, they must be willing to do what is essential for organizational success.

3 EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

The research was divided into two parts. The first part is qualitative research and the second part of the study is quantitative. A face-to-face interview was carried out by the researcher concerning the main research questions except for one, which was done via Skype. A survey was also sent via e-mail to international business students who participated in joint school and company workshops entitled “Go Strong and Growth and Internationalization events.”

The author adopted a mixed methods approach to analyse the research paradigm and explore the findings in a better and constructive manner. According to Creswell (2014, p. 215) in the mixed methods approach, one of the methods provides open-ended data, and the other makes available closed-ended data, and this is how the thesis was conducted.

In this study, Figure 10 indicates the research methodology adopted. Each component of the empirical study is discussed in detail.

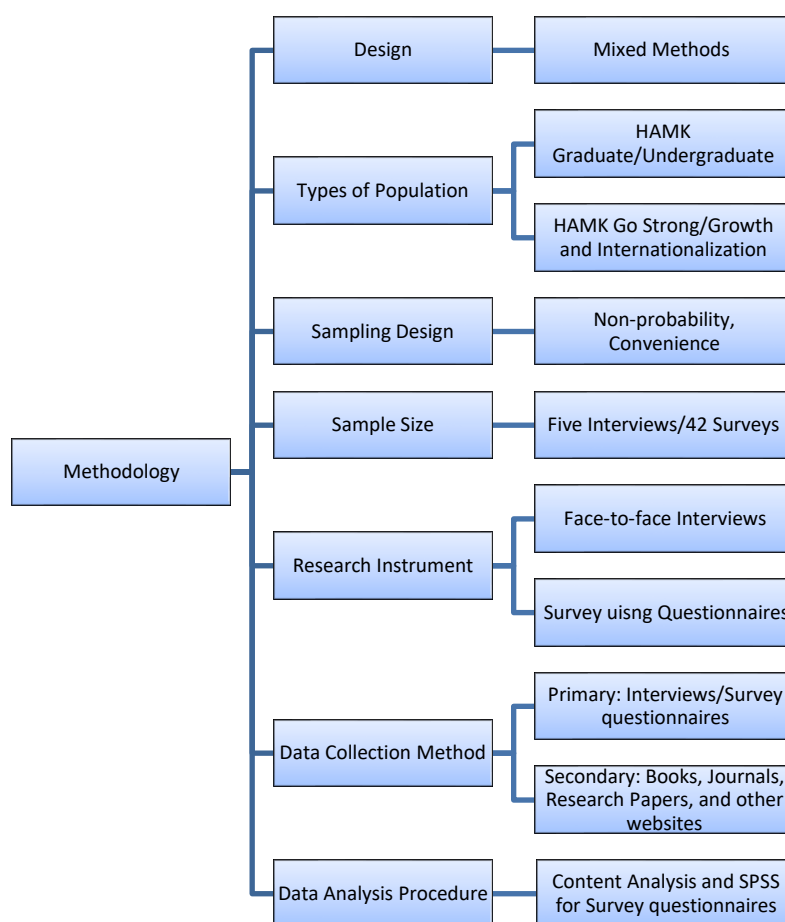


Figure 10. Research Methodology

3.1 Research approach and methods

Denscombe, (2014, p. 147) suggests that in accordance to the standards of triangulation, the mixed methods approach provides the researcher with the chance to check the findings from one strategy against the conclusions of an alternate technique. Where various techniques produce data that are more or less equivalent, the researcher can rightly assume that the findings are precise. It is asserted that mixed methods research empowers an increasingly far-reaching and complete comprehension of phenomena to be obtained than single technique methodologies, and answers complex research questions more expressively, combining particularity with a comprehensive statement (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2018, p. 33). Denscombe (2014, p. 160) likewise proposes that mixed methods research can expand the exactness of reliable data through triangulation, reduce inclination in the study, provide a constructive, problem-driven approach to the study and enable restitution among the strengths and weaknesses of study strategies.

Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2016, p. 169) noted that mixed methods research is part of various techniques that combine the utilization of quantitative and qualitative data-gathering techniques and systematic methods. Creswell and Clark (2011, p. 4) on the other hand, stated in their book entitled *Designing and Conducting Mixed Method Research* that mixed methods are the kind of research where a researcher or group of researchers joins the components of qualitative and quantitative research methods because of the expansiveness and profundity of comprehension and certification. Creswell (2014, p. 32) emphasized that mixed methods research is an approach that has to do with inquiry including gathering both quantitative and qualitative data, combining the two types of data, and utilizing specific patterns that may include philosophical presumptions and theoretical frameworks. The bottom-line assumption of this type of inquiry is that the combination of qualitative and quantitative methodologies gives a complete comprehension of a research issue than either approach alone.

Qualitative research involves diverse endeavours that are concerned with an impartial or non-discriminatory study of facts, which in some sense are impartial (Silverman, 2017, p. 7). According to Bray, Adamson, and Mason (2014, p. 74), qualitative research perceives researchers themselves as the instruments of information accumulation, as they are in frequent personal contact with their subjects, further challenging cases of a requirement for objectivity.

Designing and conducting research is often influenced by the type of strategies adopted. According to Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2016, p. 144) there are two contrasting approaches to the reasoning a researcher adopts, which are deductive and inductive. Deductive occurs when there is a rational conclusion derived from existing theories, whereas inductive

approach permits a judgement to be made on the premises observed to be backed by observations made.

A research approach can be classified in many ways, either qualitative, quantitative or both. The qualitative technique allows a research problem to be investigated in detail and permits the research to be more coherent. It encourages the gathering of top to bottom data about fewer individuals and cases. Consequently, it expands the comprehension of the facts and circumstances considered. The real downside with the qualitative approach is that it reduces the potential outcomes of speculation. In contrast, the quantitative method requires the utilization of standardized measures, with the aim that the shifting points of view and encounters of individuals can be fit into a limited number of planned classifications to which numbers are allocated. (Shahalizadeh, Amirjamshidi & Shahalizadeh, 2009, p. 110)

A survey is where the sample size is taken from a population through semi-structured interview due to its limitation in information gathering. It also helps in knowledge generation through methodical techniques in decision making. (Lavrakas, 2008, p. xxxv) Rea and Parker (2014, p. 4) indicated that survey research includes requesting self-detailed verbal data from individuals about themselves. However, the main objective of sample survey research is to enable researchers to make speculations regarding a large population by considering just a small segment of that population. Creswell (2014, p. 42) accentuated that a survey provides a numeric depiction with the patterns or opinions of a population by observing a sample of that population. It incorporates cross-sectional and longitudinal investigations utilizing questionnaires or structured interviews for data gathering to generalize from a sample to a population. Also, Cohen et al. (2018, p. 334) clarified that surveys gather data at a specific point in time with the expectation of depicting the idea of existing conditions or recognizing measures against which existing conditions can be compared or deciding the connections that exist between clear-cut events. They may change in their dimensions of complexity, from those that give straightforward frequency tallies to those that present a relational analysis.

3.2 Validity and reliability

The validity and reliability of the research approach and methods are far-reaching to the selected subject of study. Altinay and Paraskevas (2008, p. 130) specified that it is essential to assess the sufficiency of the research procedure in order to judge the quality of the outcome of the research procedure, which can be evaluated against two research criteria: validity and reliability. Cooper and Schindler (2014, p. 257) emphasised that validity is the degree to which a test measures what the research wishes to measure, whereas reliability has to do with the exactness and accuracy of a measurement methodology.

Validity and reliability have various implications in quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods research. It is important to exhibit trustworthiness to the methodology in which the researcher is working and to abide by the required standards of validity and reliability. (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 245)

To ensure the legitimacy and dependability of the study, the author used different references to support the theoretical research of the thesis. The research questions used in conducting the interviews and that of the survey were well systematized and easy to understand and allowed the respondents to express themselves at will. Next, the technique that was used for data collection increased the legitimacy and trustworthiness of the thesis. Finally, the authors ensured that the information gathered from respondents was reliable and cross-examined in order to ascertain its validity by comparing it with different information obtained from other areas for further studies.

3.3 Ethical issues

In this thesis, the author followed the codes of practices and abided by any organization's codes of conduct relevant to the research. Appropriate permissions were obtained, and discussion was held with the thesis supervisor regarding ethical approval of the study. The author took into account ethical issues at the course of the interview process by informing the interviewees about the nature of the study and informing the interviewees concerning the protection of information provided, the risk of exploitation, and any unanticipated harm.

3.4 Data collection

Data collection was carried out using qualitative and quantitative methods, which were primary data involving the interviews of four international business graduates and one international business undergraduate. The sample size of interviewees planned by the author was seven, but only five people were interviewed due to limitations. A survey was sent to selected undergraduate foreign international business students who took part in "Go Strong and Kasva ja Kansainvälisty (Growth and Internationalization) events" to support the theories. The survey was sent to 42 Häme University of Applied (HAMK) Sciences international business students and received 21 valid responses with no missing values. The 21 valid responses received shared similar demographic profiles with the other participants in the population. So, it will be safe to consider the characteristics identical to the responses received. Hence the author will assign a weight of 2 and extrapolate the results by the same factor. The interviewees were graduates who studied international business in Häme University of Applied Sciences who are currently working in different fields and one HAMK undergraduate student.

The interview was carried out on different dates between the 5th of April and the 23rd of April 2019. The author carried out four face-to-face interviews and one interview was carried out via a Skype call. The participants were chosen based on their experience in searching for jobs in Finland. The survey was sent via e-mail on 26th April 2019. Table 1 gives details of when and how the interview was conducted.

Table 1. Interview data

Interviewees	Gender	Date	Place	Mode of interview
First interviewee	Female	April 05.2019	Tampere	Face-to-face
Second interviewee	Female	April 06.2019	Tampere	Face-to-face
Third interviewee	Male	April 14.2019	Tampere	Face-to-face
Fourth interviewee	Female	April 16.2019	Tampere	Face-to-face
Fifth interviewee	Female	April 23.2019	Tampere	Via Skype internet call

Procedure

Every interview commenced with an introduction of both the subject and the interviewer himself, and all interview data were recorded with the consent of the interviewees throughout the processes due to concerns of ethics, validity, and reliability. The data was later transcribed by the interviewer. The interview duration lasted between 15 to 20 minutes. The research question(s) allowed the respondents to share their thoughts freely regarding the subject under discussion, and the only time the interviewer intervened was to ask follow-up questions based on the research objectives.

4 ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

In this chapter, the author analysed the qualitative data using content analysis with the help of transcribed texts from the interviews conducted. The surveys, which are the quantitative aspect, were analysed with “Statistical Package for Social Sciences” (SPSS-24).

4.1 Data analysing

After transcribing the interviews, codes were later developed by reading through each paragraph and assigning a word that explains the paragraph. In all, about 58 codes were generated from the five interviews conducted based on the research objectives.

Themes were later built from the codes by grouping the codes into similar categories in respect of the main subject and issue the codes were addressing. After consolidating the codes, names were assigned to each group to make the themes. In all, four main themes were developed: opportunities, competence, the conducive environment and challenges. Sub-themes were also developed under each main theme. Figure 11 illustrates the themes developed.

According to Saunders et al. (2016, p. 584) a theme is a broad category incorporating several codes that are related to each other and which shows a thought that is important to the research question. A theme may likewise be a single code which indicates a theory that assumes general significance to the research question and is consequently raised to be turned into a theme. Woods (2006, p. 31) expressed that a theme is a statement of meaning that goes through all the greater part of the relevant data.

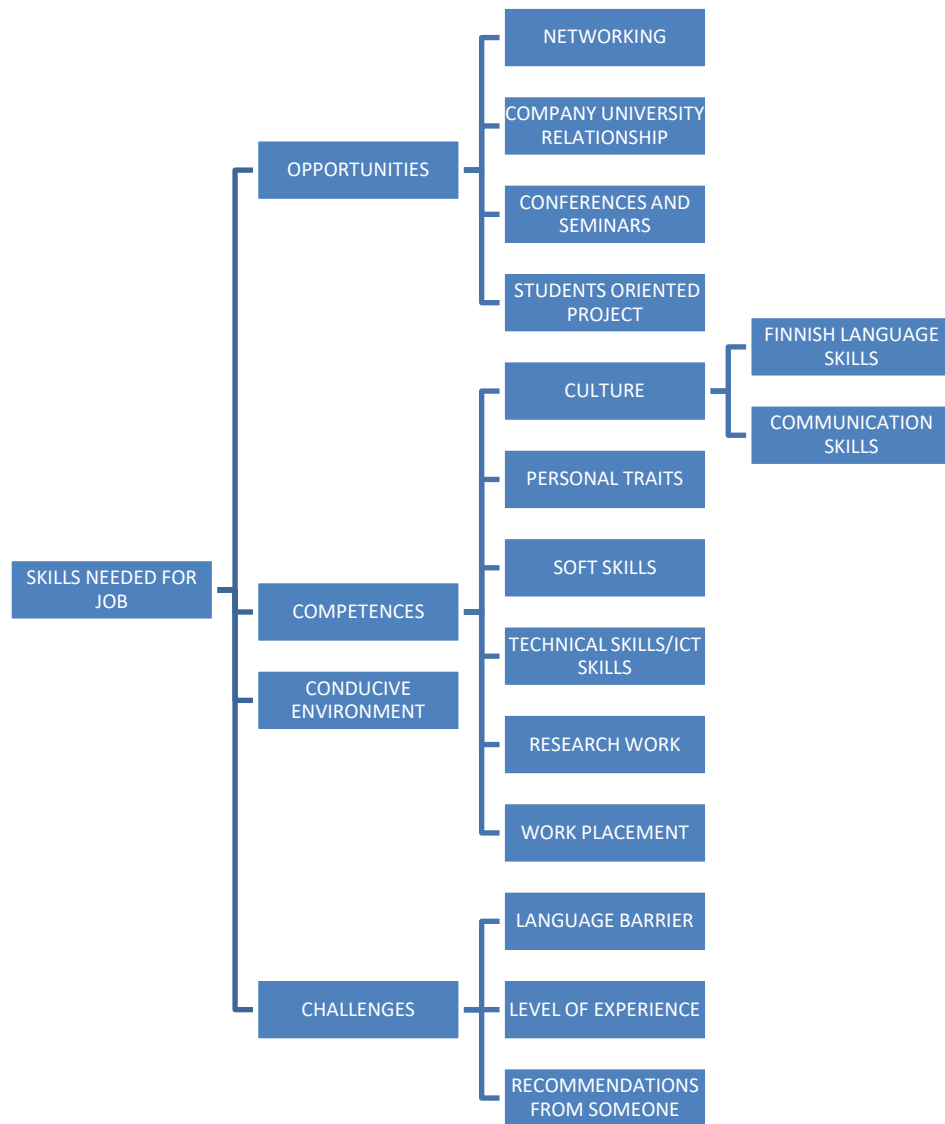


Figure 11. Themes developed from (interviewed) data

Table 2. Respondents responses as linked to the themes.

Interviewees	Opportunities	Competences	Conductive environment	Challenges
First interviewee	<i>"Also, I think networking is very important because there are many local companies that are actually looking for employees,</i>	<i>"I think that there are some ways that international students can help themselves with in finding a job in Finland, but I think the most important one</i>	<i>"Identifying areas of interest."</i>	<i>"Most local companies do not publish jobs online for example, so if you have a network and they can recommend you to those companies</i>

	<i>but you do not know about it, because you do not know about the name of the companies."</i>	<i>is to have language skills. Because in many of the companies here if you want to be employed then you should really know about the Finnish language."</i>		<i>then there will be an increase in the chance that you might get employed."</i>
Second interviewee	<i>"HAMK could try to engage little bit more companies from different areas."</i>	<p><i>"If it is a Finance, they have to study maybe basic programs that are used in Finnish market, if it is marketing, then they have to learn the tools to create marketing material."</i></p> <p><i>"First of all is the skills background that makes you specialized and makes you suitable to certain area."</i></p> <p><i>"Second level, is of course your personality, personal traits so that you have to develop your communications skills that you can talk clearly,</i></p>		

		<p><i>confident, and how to create that opportunities.”</i></p> <p><i>“Language skills is also important.”</i></p> <p><i>“If HAMK could get more research work to real companies for business students.”</i></p>		
Third interviewee	<p><i>“Getting involved into business related projects that are running through the different cities within Finland especially here in Tampere.”</i></p>	<p><i>“The first thing is being proactive of course and I guess visiting entrepreneurs hip societies.”</i></p>		
Fourth interviewee	<p><i>“You need to try and make your CV to be available online.”</i></p> <p><i>“Also, you need to have an active LinkedIn account which you follow only your prospective employers.”</i></p> <p><i>“In Finland, there is one thing that I have realized</i></p>			<p><i>“They can try and internalize the jobs as the course itself is international business. So, I think the main problem here is the language barrier.”</i></p>

	<i>that, it is very important for you to get a referral even in the most manual of jobs."</i>			
Fifth interviewee	<i>"There are job fairs, education fairs and all different kinds of events."</i> <i>"You have to be very focus on networking."</i>	<i>"It is very important to blend in the culture if you are planning to stay after the studies."</i> <i>"You just have to prove that you are very ambitious and very interested in pursuing the job."</i> <i>"Social skills are way more important."</i> <i>"Communication skills is 100% needed when finding a job and during interviews."</i>		<i>"Companies ask for fluent Finnish language".</i> <i>"The level of experience."</i>

4.2 Discussion of results

4.2.1 Opportunities

From the results, four main factors emerged as the ways of getting job opportunities by international students and they are networking; going for job fairs and seminars; engaging in business related projects and building a good company university relationship. The respondents put it this way.

Networking

Networking is seen as a way of getting in touch with people and companies who can notify you in case there is any job opportunity. The argument for networking is that most often, you will need someone to introduce you or recommend a job opportunity to you. According to Vest (2014) good

networking happens when people have equal values and understand each other. It is also about what others need and linking them with people who can help in one way or another to land a job. 'Vest' again points to the fact that, in networking, one should be able to discover the value in each person by not discounting them due to their titles because they may have valuable acquaintances.

Doyle (2019) on the other hand, explicitly pointed out that the purpose of career networking includes utilizing individual, expert, scholarly or familial contacts to help with the pursuit of employment, accomplish professional objectives, or study in the field in which you would like to work. Networking can be a decent method for both graduates and undergraduates to find out about job openings in the organizations in which they would like to work. Asking people for information instead of asking for a specific job opening when networking is the best way. Building cordial relationships with people during events and seminars increases the chances of finding out about new job openings or getting recommendations. (Besson, n.d.)

Moreover, local businesses which graduates and undergraduates IB students, might not be aware of that are looking for employees and have not published it online, could be linked to them by their networks. This might also increase the chance that they might get employed. Networking also helps them to get other people to know about them, which in some cases would make it easier for graduates to get in contact with the employers. Again, when networking, it is important to let the people the individual come into contact with know about his or her profile and what skills and competence they have which would make it easier for them to connect them with any job openings and reliable employment agencies. Also, if the language barrier is an issue, international business students or graduates can check to see if English is the working language, so they could try and follow those companies and try to see if there are opportunities that they could make use of when job hunting.

Job fairs

Attending job fairs and company visits are important because they often lead to job opportunities. The point raised here is that attending seminars and job fairs, meeting entrepreneurs, managers, and prospective employers would lead you to know the kinds of companies that have job openings. It is also easy for you to identify available professional job positions. Goodman and Arcand (2019) expressed that not only do most employers attend job fairs to increase the recognition of their company brand, they also may screen potential job seekers in order to save time. Job fairs offer an open door for companies or managers to conduct a preliminary screening of potential applicants on the spot.

Meanwhile, there can be many companies at the job fairs, so it would be good for a candidate to research ahead of time to know the companies to contact to make the best of time. Moreover, knowing your target helps to customize materials by surfing through the company's websites to see what employment opportunities they have and the prerequisites for each position. Profita (2019) specified that before attending a job fair, candidates or students should find out which organizations will be at the event by contacting the event organizers to ask about possible recruiting companies, or search for information about the participating companies either on the university's webpage ahead of time, so as to prioritize a list of executives they would like to meet within organizations of interest.

Employers are hoping to hear what you can accomplish for them, so it would be better to prepare a quick pitch on your aptitudes and experience (if you have any) as to how they can address issues. Beam (2016, p. 32) affirm the point that attending a job fair may have multiple effects on individuals who visit. The main aim of participants is to be invited for a preliminary interview by participating companies or agencies which may lead to possible employment, but in the presence of inadequate data, participants may still have the opportunity to learn about their labour market prospects.

The study shows that even though academic performance may be needed in some cases, it is not essential for most employers. What employers look out for is the social skills and competence candidates possess. What a potential employee can bring to their reputable organization to project the image of the organization are way more important to an employer.

Engaging in business-related projects

The study indicates that students have to join events related to the companies which they are interested in and promote themselves by getting involved in projects that would help develop their abilities, take responsibility, and find channels to create opportunities in order to secure a job. Hard (2018) stated that most organizations make an appearance at trade events purposely to project the company's image and at the same time look for people who can fill a position in the organization. Another argument that came up from the study is that international business students or graduates must be proactive by visiting entrepreneurship societies, for example, Tribe Tampere or getting involved in business-related projects that are running through the different cities within Finland, especially in the Pirkanmaa region, while networking and searching for a job.

Company school relationship (events)

The study revealed that although the university engages students with local companies with which to interact, more company visits can be organized that can inspire students to work harder or study harder. For instance, the best method for the university is to organize more projects and more events where students can be part of the decision-making process for those events because that is one of the best ways for students to practice what they are taught. In addition, the university could try to engage more companies from different areas and industries so that companies would be able to not just present but also to see what kind of students there are. There could be a mutual exchange where students could have a conversation with companies slightly informally and learn from them. According to Allen (2017) through company school relationships, companies can use their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) platforms to collaborate with the university to create a lasting positive image that will, in turn, increase the company's profit margin and competitive advantage.

Furthermore, the data disclosed that the university has to make the students aware of the different projects that are being run by different cities. For example, in Tampere, many projects are being run by the city. It would be easy to get students integrated into these projects by forwarding the information which, at the end, might create opportunities for the students. Wiles (2012, p. 15) detailed that organizations which engage universities improve the possibilities of students when seeking employment. Organizations might look more favourably at recruiting candidates who show commitment, interest, and enthusiasm in their organization and the industry. Likewise, the university can come up with a job offer website which they send to both graduates and undergraduates from their partner organizations that are hiring students who do not necessarily need Finnish as a language.

Although the university (HAMK) has an internal social publication page (Yammer) that publishes some of these jobs, most of them require Finnish as a language, so that can be hindering because not all international students can speak Finnish at the level that is required by the organizations. Moreover, once students graduate, they do not have access to the page so they would not be able to know job opportunities of the kind there, that they can be able to tap. Thus, the university needs to come up with post-graduate software that brings together all the university's alumni and shares with them the available job opportunities both in Finnish and in English.

Even though the university has been organizing purposeful activities with small companies in Valkeakoski, for example, the International day or Christmas events, this could be extended to the companies in Tampere (Pirkanmaa region) because there are more opportunities there than in

Valkeakoski. Barret (2018) stated that organizations and schools have a great deal to offer each other. Regardless of whether organizations prefer to employ students from a local college, contribute to community renewal activities, or need to give some genuinely academic materials, these connections help fortify the ties amongst the schools, communities, and the organizations.

4.2.2 Competence

The findings (the results of the interviews) show that factors such as adaptation to culture through language skills and communication skills, personal traits, technical and information technology (IT) skills, research work, and work placement are the most important competencies needed by international business students in order to be hired in Finland.

Adapting to culture through language skills and communication skills

Interviewees highlighted the significance of language skills in adapting to the culture because many of the companies in Finland would prefer to employ people who have Finnish language, and preferably Swedish or English depending on the sector, and can fluently communicate with it. Equally important, candidates must take into account communication skills as a way of adapting to an environment which is not familiar to an international student and with that, it is easy to get to know the people and how to communicate with them in spite of cultural differences. McQuerrey (2018) points out that working with individuals of various backgrounds, be it nationality or race, can be a fulfilling and satisfying professional experience. An individual can extend his or her viewpoints by learning diverse communication skills and approaches while cooperating with individuals of different backgrounds. Be that as it may, working in a multicultural work environment requires a specific measure of class, strategy, and willingness to learn, adapt and compromise. Thus, it is important to blend into the culture if you are planning to stay after studies, and it is necessary to hang out with the locals as well as other foreigners who have lived in the country for a longer time and have networks and know their way around.

Interviewees also expressed their views that Finnish language skills are very important and if you have that then you have a more significant scope of choice, but if you do not have that, then you try to look for big companies that are more or less international. Furthermore, working in a foreign country, it is important to integrate yourself into the system and at least understand the language that is used in the workplace in the country. Another argument raised is that international graduates or students should look for companies that have subsidiaries in their country or trade around their region and capitalize on that since they can understand the culture and possibly speak the language which may benefit both the company and the employee.

Additionally, communication plays a significant role in finding a job in Finland. Through effective communication, students or candidates can network with professionals and companies by meticulously showcasing what they are capable of and what the employers should expect of applicants when hired in their reputable organizations. Brenner (2018) argues that the current business environment is growing to incorporate individuals from societies and nations around the world. It takes extraordinary abilities to bridge these numerous societies. Hence, a person's affability and regard help build up a reasonable basis for effective communication.

Interviewees also emphasized the importance of Finnish language skills because, most big companies prefer people who can speak and write the language for the reason that, especially when it comes to jobs in marketing and creative positions, the employee has to communicate with the language due to the nature of the market. The university should make available some extracurricular Finnish courses for students or even organize a more significant group course after the regular classes. Since most of the classes are in English, it is difficult to study Finnish while pursuing the degree. The ability to speak the Finnish language is esteemed in Finnish working life. International students must familiarise themselves with the Finnish culture because, Finnish working life values diligence, individuality, and independent initiative (TE-palvelut, 2014). Equally important, in order to network successfully, you have to be ambitious, open-minded, and accepting of the culture, traits which employers may consider when hiring a candidate to work with a team.

Personal traits

The first consideration employers make in hiring a potential candidate is the particular skills they have which are suitable for the specific area. The second consideration is, of course, personality. It is imperative to develop the communication skills so that you can talk clearly, confidently and create opportunities. According to Profita (2019) it is advisable for candidates or students to maintain a positive and energetic attitude and pay attention to body language and nonverbal communication during job fairs because this shows the personal attributes of the candidate. Nonetheless, what some companies care about is the approach of the employee and the way they think because, even if the employee does not have the skills for the job, they can learn quickly. So, what companies want to invest in is the energy and the attitude of the employee towards work and learning something new.

Technical and IT skills

The interviews show that in Finland, there are many projects that both university undergraduates and graduates can join in order to improve some of their soft skills and even technical skills. Taking part in those

projects, can help the students with their curriculum vitae (CV), and it can also help them with their competence. These projects done in Finland might also increase the chance of getting employed. Bean-Mellinger (2019), in his article "Most Important Employee Skills in the Workplace," stated that employers are not asking for nerdlevel knowledge unless IT is the applicant's field, yet they anticipate that the applicant should understand basic computer software programs that workplaces regularly use, including those in making reports. If the individual is in a field that uses specialized software, then he or she will need to know how to utilize that as well. Depending on the industries that international business students are interested in, be it Finance, Management, or Marketing, they have to study basic programs that are used in the Finnish job market to enhance their capabilities.

Research work

Research work was also brought forward during the interviews. The discussion for research work is that the university could get more research work from real companies for business students. This would enhance the competence of international business students and create work opportunities for them. These types of opportunities already exist among engineering students who have access to actual companies and real projects. These opportunities are not readily available to international business due to this, they always work over hypothetical cases. On the other hand, the university has many connections with different companies that have been engaging in various projects. The university could take advantage of this situation by creating cordial relationships with the companies and trying to help students meet up with these companies with a view to developing their competence. Therefore, building this bridge will help the incoming students or even the alumni in getting a job.

Work placement

Work placement was also seen as a way of gaining experience and development of skills and competence. The discussion for this is that the university can connect the students with companies but not necessarily ask the companies to hire the students. It is the responsibility of students to promote themselves by being friendly and displaying enthusiasm for the company in order to get an internship or work placement from which the students can gain experience that can either help in being employed by the company or create an opportunity for employment. Again, another way for students to get a work placement, create opportunities, and develop their competence is by having the university collaborate with companies to create a small task for them, for example, summer projects. Over the course of the project, students could showcase their skills and perhaps stay on for further work. This justifies the point raised by Allen (2017) that ideally, organizations ought to give hands-on workforce experience for students. When students are afforded the chance to work in their

preferred fields, they are better prepared for their post-graduate experiences. Organizations can help with this by providing internships for university students and hiring students to work in their organizations as assistants and trainees.

In order to gain experience and be a suitable candidate in the eyes of companies, international business students or graduates can start with something simple, for instance, summer jobs where they can grow their skills. Indeed, international business students can target local middle-sized companies, for the reason that big companies are so automated and would not certainly get to the applicants' CV, especially if they realised that the applicant does not have the native language skills to integrate easily into the organisational culture and system as a whole. Barret (2018) emphasised that offering an internship through a university builds up a direct contracting pipeline, and organisations recurrently hire previous interns because they have a decisive advantage over the competition. These can cut down the organisation's retention expenses. Indeed, as individuals, to an ever-increasing extent, move from organisation to organisation, the cost of training and integrating is a genuine burden.

Middle-size companies can overlook that and evaluate the person through 'on-the-job-training.' Having an internship with Finnish companies is an easy way of getting into the working system, and that can also be a door to job opportunities within the company. The university (HAMK) can help the students get internships before they graduate by recommending the students to organizations that they have contacts with because, in Finland, it is very important to get a referral even in menial jobs. Profita (2019) stated that when undergraduates are attending university career fairs, they should target their job or internship search by cautiously reviewing the career, jobs, or HR segment of the organizations' webpages to pinpoint internships or jobs that are a good match for their interests, expertise, values, and experience profile. What is more, prospective university graduates should pay attention to training programs. Again, they should prepare a statement to convey the reasons why some of these jobs or types of jobs are a solid match, given their strengths and interests.

4.2.3 Conducive environment

The evidence presented here from the data suggests that most international business graduates do not pay attention to their areas of interest but chase jobs that are not readily available in the job market. Often, various small businesses need people to handle positions such as Finance and Marketing, positions which graduates can easily fill.

Again, in big cities, it is easy to get connected to people who can recommend some of these businesses, unlike the smaller towns. Having more significant scope also helps by not limiting job searches for a particular geographical area. Although most graduates might want to work

in places that suit them, it would be advisable for them to cast their nets wider and not necessarily to limit themselves.

4.2.4 Discussion on research questions

How can international students create for themselves opportunities and competencies in order to be employed in Finland?

International business students and graduates should attend job fairs, engage in business-related projects which are organized by the school as well as companies in the region, getting themselves acquainted with what is expected by those companies and the kind of people they would prefer to work in their companies. Additionally, events organized by the university with the companies are another platform by which international business students can take advantage.

To display or develop competence, international business graduates and undergraduates must adapt to the environment they find themselves in by learning the language required for work and they must understand the culture of the country and adjust to it to make life easier for them to be able to connect with professionals and employers in various fields. Again, the analysis explains that individual characteristic such as attitude and tolerance are essential when networking and searching for jobs in Finland. In addition, competencies like technical and IT skills can be developed through projects and events that are organized by the university and companies. Conducting research for companies, for example, product launch or market penetration researches, are good platforms for creating opportunities and building your competence.

Furthermore, work placement is also seen as the right way for international business students to demonstrate their skills and promote themselves through various work practices. Concern was also raised about the environment in which international business graduates find themselves. In some cities, it is easy to get connected with jobs through peers or people you meet at events who have links with professional and company managers in your field of studies.

In what way can the university create an enabling environment for International Business students to thrive?

It was asserted that although the university had been organizing company events for students, this could be intensified by engaging more companies in different projects with the students which would, in turn, opens doors for employment opportunities and competence enhancement. International business students need to target companies that are ready to recruit fresh graduates during job fairs and company visits organized by the university in collaboration with partner companies.

Furthermore, as suggested in the analysis, the university can give students a leading role during these events to practice what they are being taught in the classroom. Hence, the university can share information with students on projects run by the city. Also, a job offer webpage could be shared with both graduates and undergraduates because alumni students do not have access to the university page after the completion of studies. Accordingly, Finnish language skills are essential in a sense that, most organizations in Finland prefer to employ people who can express themselves in the language and can communicate with it at the workplace, most importantly when the job involves customer services. Even though there are other channels through which international students can learn the Finnish language, the university in one way or another, should provide supplementary Finnish courses in addition to what is taught at school. These will help the students to devote their time to learning the language.

The survey questions were analyzed with frequency tables in “Statistical Package for the Social Sciences” (SPSS-24) using the data from respondents utilizing a frequency table.

Frequency table 3 and figure 12 show the percentages of the respondents to the survey questionnaires, of which 48% were female and 52% were male.

Table 3. Respondents data

Frequency Table

		Gender			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Female	10	47.6	47.6	47.6
	Male	11	52.4	52.4	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

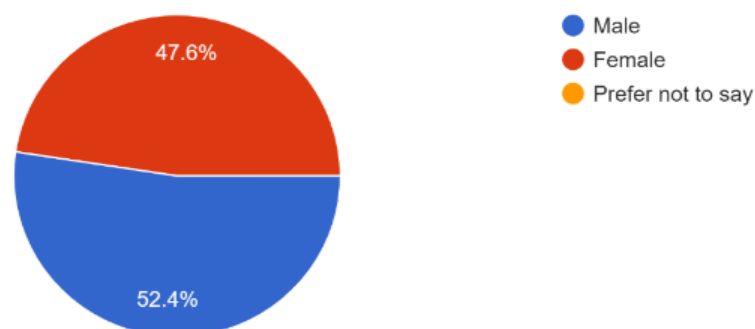


Figure 12. Respondents data as a Pie Chart

Most of the respondents to the questionnaire perceive Finnish language skills as a means of creating opportunities and competence to be employed in Finland. 52% of the respondents gave a positive response that Finnish language skills are the most important avenue for foreign international business students in creating for themselves opportunities of employment in Finland. 33% of the respondents perceive that language skills are very important, whereas 14% also believe the language is important in securing a job in Finland. Moreover, academic performance was also seen by some of the respondents as a contributing factor in securing a job. 43% gave a “Yes” answer, and 43% also gave a “Maybe” answer if academic performance is taken into account by employers in Finland, whereas 14% indicated “No.” Table 4, 5 and figure 13 show the percentage of responses. Please refer to Figures 17 and 18 in Appendix 1.

For some professions, academic performance is needed. For instance, in jobs like teaching, sales, marketing creativity, public relations offices, and communication. However, in some of the jobs, less weight is placed on academic performance. For example, most employers might prefer aptitude and willingness to learn new skillsets over having an excellent academic reputation. Though aptitude is important, it is the attitudinal skill of a person’s desire to learn, which is more appreciated by Finnish employers. In Finland, employers believe in scalability as learning knowledge of a desirable skillset for a learning environment.

Table 4. Importance of Finnish language skills

Importance of Finnish language skills for Foreign IB Students					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Important	3	14.3	14.3	14.3
	Very Important	7	33.3	33.3	47.6
	Most important	11	52.4	52.4	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

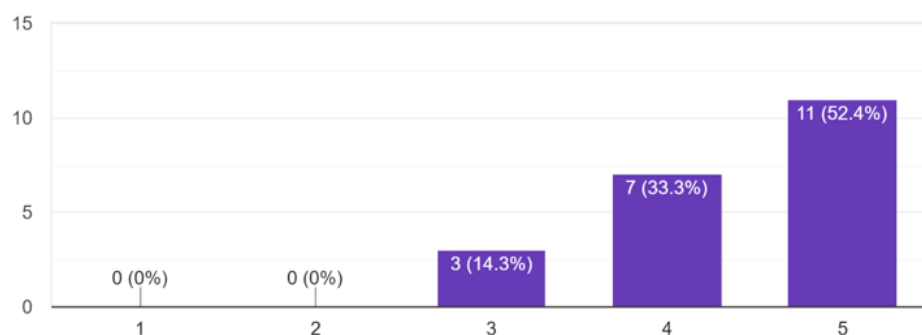


Figure 13. Importance of Finnish language skills

Table 5. Importance of academic performance

Academic performance					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	9	42.9	42.9	42.9
	No	3	14.3	14.3	57.1
	Maybe	9	42.9	42.9	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

On the other hand, the majority of the respondents sees competencies such as skills related to building curriculum vitae (CV), how to find job skills necessary for starting a personal business, using LinkedIn and other tools, knowledge about the Finnish job market, and networking with companies as significant factors. Frequency table 6 demonstrates that 43% of the respondents felt like building a credible curriculum vitae to present a candidate's background, skills, and achievements, which is also called personal branding, is a vital competence to entice potential employers to give them a job, whereas 29% think that building the right CV is to some extent significant in securing a job. Furthermore, 19% of the respondents believe it is somewhat important, and 9% believe presenting a good CV is not the case, but how best it is utilised. 48% of the respondents found using channels such as mol.fi, duunitori.fi, and barona.fi is essential in finding a job, and 24% perceived it as somewhat important. Moreover, 38% of the respondents think skills related to starting their own business are an excellent platform for connecting with people who are already in the job market. Also, 33% think it is a gateway to connecting with other business owners who might eventually link you up with other business persons.

Table 6. Building CV, how to find job, and starting own business

Skills related to finding a job (Building CV/Resume)					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	1	4.8	4.8	4.8
	Not very important	1	4.8	4.8	9.5
	Somewhat important	4	19.0	19.0	28.6
	Important	6	28.6	28.6	57.1
	Very much	9	42.9	42.9	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

How to find a job					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	1	4.8	4.8	4.8
	Not very important	2	9.5	9.5	14.3
	Somewhat important	5	23.8	23.8	38.1
	Important	10	47.6	47.6	85.7
	Very much	3	14.3	14.3	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

Skills regarding to starting your business					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	4	19.0	19.0	19.0
	Somewhat important	8	38.1	38.1	57.1
	Important	7	33.3	33.3	90.5
	Very much	2	9.5	9.5	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

In addition, table 7 also demonstrates that 52% of the respondents believe that using LinkedIn and other tools for connecting with professionals in the required field of studies would be of great help to the individual and 24% think it is important in securing a job when a person puts a good profile on his or her LinkedIn page and connects well with people on the platform who can recommend them to their friends and company owners. On the other hand, 48% of the respondents believe that having a piece of in-depth knowledge about the Finnish job market is very important in securing a job and at the same time using it to create opportunities through networking with the right companies that have open job positions.

Likewise, 43% think it is important to know the trend of the job market in Finland, which would aid in applying to companies that are more internationally based in Finland. Furthermore, 71% of the respondents believe that networking with companies during fairs and events is the most important in building the needed network by showcasing your talent and what you can offer to the companies available, and 14% also think it is important to create a link with companies' representatives at such events. Hence, it is about how to build the right networks because a person's network determines his or her net worth in terms of goodwill and the extent of reach — staying connected with professionals opens up more opportunities especially in the job market.

Table 7. LinkedIn, Finnish job market, and networking with companies

Using LinkedIn and other tools					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	3	14.3	14.3	14.3
	Somewhat important	2	9.5	9.5	23.8
	Important	11	52.4	52.4	76.2
	Very much	5	23.8	23.8	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

Knowledge about Finnish job market					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Somewhat important	2	9.5	9.5	9.5
	Important	9	42.9	42.9	52.4
	Very much	10	47.6	47.6	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

Networking with companies					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	1	4.8	4.8	4.8
	Somewhat important	2	9.5	9.5	14.3
	Important	3	14.3	14.3	28.6
	Very much	15	71.4	71.4	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

Attitude, motivation, and professional behaviour were also highlighted as significant factors by some of the respondents as an integral part of getting a job. 52% believe that behaving professionally at interviews and talking to employers is important and 47% believe that attitude and motivation are also very important during a job search and after getting the job in order to be motivated at the job. Nonetheless, 24% of respondents who participated in Go Strong events and workshops said that they acquired skills related to finding a job, i.e. building a CV/resume, and 19% said that they acquired competences and skills on Using LinkedIn to connect with business owners and executives in creating opportunities in their field of interest as well as recognizing their own skills. Moreover, 10% also said that they acquired skills on how to network with companies at events and fairs, which is a way of creating for themselves opportunities for an immediate or future employment. Please refer to frequency tables 9, 10 and figure 19 in Appendix 2 for more details.

Furthermore, some of the respondents said that, apart from networking, using LinkedIn to connect with professionals, and fine-tuning of CV, competencies such as being proactive and being responsible as well as learning to be flexible on a job search is of utmost importance to every candidate or job seeker. Additionally, most of the respondents who took part (participated) in either subcontracting fair visit, recognizing one's own skills, personal branding, career week, growth and internationalization, and personal consulting, said those were the measures of competence they acquired. It would help them in building their capacity to meet up with

the current demand in the job market and be able to deliver in their respective fields. See table 11 and 12 in Appendix 3/1 and 3/2.

In most cases, employers consider benefits they can derive from the said candidate(s) in relation to how reliable the employee would be for the foreseeable future on the job. First, it was a knowledge-based economy in the 1970s to the 1990s, then it became a job-oriented economy, now it has become an information-based economy (mixed economy) where knowledge and competence are required in securing a job. Lifelong learning is going to become one of the bases on which people who have left school for years may have to go for a refresher course(s) for remedial training to bridge the gap between the existing knowledge and the current knowledge in order to be abreast with current trends. (Apte, Karmarkar, and Nath, 2008)

Equally important, the majority of the respondents believe that in order for the university to create an enabling environment for international business students to thrive, the institution should offer more support for the students in building their Finnish language competence and skillsets by offering more career development courses, organizing culture and language speaking clubs with Finns, creating workshops with Finnish students and working together in projects, and providing optional advanced courses together with basic Finnish courses. 62% of the respondents believe that when the institution offers career-related courses to their students, it will enable them to build on their traits in handling tasks before and after graduating. It will also let them know what to face in the job market and how competitive it can be, whereas 38% think that is not the case. See Appendix 4.

Additionally, 62% think organizing culture and language speaking clubs with Finns would help the students in developing their language skills and being able to adapt to the culture without difficulty. Since most organizations hire their own citizens, who often share a common culture coupled with that of the organization, as their staff, it would benefit the students at least to gain some knowledge about what to expect of their co-workers. Figure 14 shows the percentages of responses. See Appendix 4 for details on frequency table 13.

Over 62% of the respondents suggested the provision of advanced courses and connecting students with various projects as well as utilising native Finnish speaking student tutors to support the Finnish teacher during part of the course. These avoid the teacher being overwhelmed by questions/clarifications. Again, the institution can partner with private Finnish language schools so that the students can take Finnish courses easily because a lot of international students are willing to pay some amount of money to learn advanced Finnish language skills. 38% indicated that this is not necessarily a must. Figure 15 shows the percentages of responses. See Appendix 4 for details on frequency table 13.

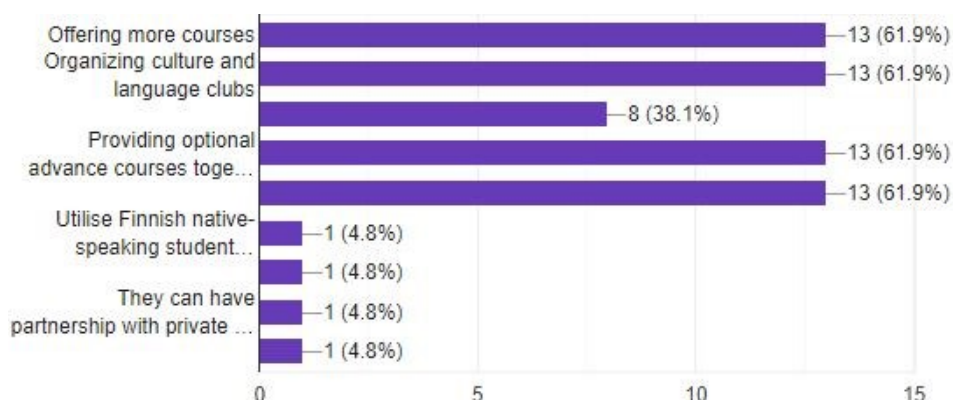


Figure 14. Institution offering support for international students in building their Finnish language skills

Survey questions 11, 14, 15, 18 and 20 (see Appendix 5) are open-ended questions which have received quantitative responses; hence the author has analysed these responses using Textual Format and has presented the findings as to the summary of outcomes.

First and foremost, respondents detailed that various experiences shared by the speakers during Go Strong events gave them an insight into what to do additionally with the skills and competence they already possess to find a job in Finland. They also learned about being professional, how to network, Finnish marketing and how to start a business, managing obstacles and the most important in succeeding and what to focus on. In addition, they learned about finding local companies, being flexible, knowing the language and most of all, being competitive. In some cases, IB students may not necessarily do precisely business-related jobs after graduation, but the important thing is that the candidate would be able to take advantage of potential chances from different employers and never give up if not successful during the initial attempts for the jobs.

Secondly, respondents suggested that the university (HAMK) could help IB students to develop their competence and skills by engaging them in activities like career workshops, career coaching, and better-planned school projects with more empowerment for students to implement their ideas to showcase their skills and competence. They should also provide more meetings with companies and their representatives and offer more intensive Finnish language studies with more practical information on how to use some tools.

Next, the majority of the respondents held the notion that for students to utilize competence gained in school to get a job in Finland, they must build their self-esteem, self-confidence, attitude, and motivations when seeking for jobs. Moreover, international students who have good networking with companies and understand the Finnish culture and language can easily connect with a Finnish-based company with international links, because

they would likely prefer someone who knows the local culture but also knows the target country culture, and any international office of such a company ought to prefer a local employee who has been trained in Finland.

Subsequently, most of the respondents indicated that for international business students to develop their Finnish language skills, they must engage in meaningful activity with the natives and practice the language with them. Also, they recognized that they needed to be serious with courses offered by the university, most importantly having a goal and the desire to learn the Finnish language by attending private lessons and being firm and steadfast with the methods they use in learning the language, whether self-taught or in class.

Finally, some respondents stated that for international business students to create opportunities to find a job in Finland, they must learn about the Finnish market and how it works and what kind of businesses have success, usually if they want to have a start-up. Again, there was an emphasis on socializing with more Finns because many job opportunities are traded between acquaintances and prove themselves best. Moreover, they must visit different job fairs, find connections on a personal level, apply to more companies and be aware of upcoming job places. They need to know their value related to their country; also, they need to know things that Finnish students cannot replace.

Most of the respondents highlighted the areas of Finnish language studies, networking, visiting business events and seminars, and engaging companies. It brings to the fore the fact that the language is vital and a force to reckon with even when you possess all the competence and skills needed.

Challenges were also raised as a concern by both interviewees and survey respondents. The concerns were analysed using texts and graphical presentations (charts) based on the methodology used. The first interviewee claimed that although a person might have a good network, it is difficult for your networks to recommend you with most local companies because those companies do not publish job advertisements online to the notice of the public. The fourth interviewee said that because of the language barrier, the university could try and internalize the job as the course itself is an international business. The fifth interviewee asserted that most companies prefer someone with some level of working experience who can fill an immediate gap or position without spending many resources on training unless the job requires specific training due to the task(s) to be handled. Also, there is a glass ceiling to international students as companies prefer a local person who is fluent in both Finnish and English. That being the case, most of the school tasks are also done in a group which does not help most of the students after graduation. The university (HAMK) has to encourage the students to handle tasks individually so that they can face the realities that await them after

graduation without always having to consult people. See Figure 11 and Table 2 on page 28.

Also, some of the survey respondents raised parallel concerns where language as a tool, competition, working experience, the university's role, employer attitude, and networking mattered. More than 90% claimed that Finnish language skills are a necessity when it comes to job hunting and socializing with people in Finland. It is a tool that makes it easier for foreigners to learn and adapt to the culture systems of what is acceptable and what is not acceptable in society and the workplace in general. These become a guiding principle in knowing the right channels to use to liaise with people and companies. So, without language skills, it becomes difficult for international graduate students in Finland to gain access to companies since most companies prefer to hire people who can speak, read, and write the language. 71% of respondents stated that most employers require applicants to have at least a minimum job experience(s) to fit into their companies whereas 33% think the competitiveness of the job market makes it difficult for international students to break through. In addition, 57% of respondents specified that networking with people and companies are challenging since most people would not open up to you to be able to approach them while 29% think employers' attitudes towards employing international students is not encouraging because of trust and 24% also assume the role of the universities is a factor. Figure 15 and frequency Table 8 exemplifies the percentage of responses.

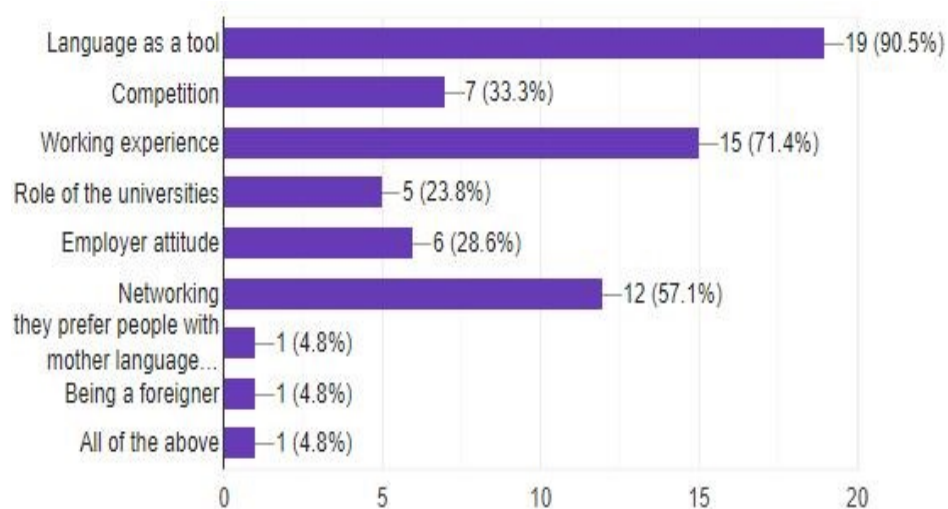


Figure 15. Challenges in finding a Job in Finland

Table 8. Language as a Tool, Competition, Working Experience, etc.

Language as a Tool					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	19	90.5	90.5	90.5
	No	2	9.5	9.5	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

University's Role					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	5	23.8	23.8	23.8
	No	16	76.2	76.2	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

Competition					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	7	33.3	33.3	33.3
	No	14	66.7	66.7	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

Employer Attitude					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	7	28.6	28.6	33.3
	No	14	71.4	71.4	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

Working Experience					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	15	71.4	71.4	71.4
	No	6	28.6	28.6	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

Networking					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	13	57.1	57.1	61.9
	No	8	42.9	42.9	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

5 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results, the author suggests that international students should make use of tools such as "Talent Explorer" and "Workplace Finnish Training," organised by TE/ELY (employment services) which could be very useful for international students in marketing themselves and working for a parent company's subsidiary abroad or doing market penetration for the company in their home country. With this, they would be able to know more about the companies and how to climb the employment ladder.

Although investigations show that language and IT skills, for example, the Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system, are really needed in order to succeed in the job market, most organizations these days also look out for applicants who are knowledgeable about the history of the organization, its products, services, and figures (statistics) and their strategies.

International business students should not limit themselves to only their field of studies. They can learn some IT programs that are needed by companies. This can be an added advantage to the applications to the companies that need people with such diverse backgrounds. They also have to apply to many companies using popular websites and apply at the right time and to the right positions. Moreover, the university has to have a resource person who will be in charge of handling students job situations even though the university has an internal social media page that publicizes job opportunities from time to time. Also, international students should strengthen their presence through the main job portals.

Since the Finnish language is one of the biggest challenges that international students face when they apply to organizations due to its dominance in the workplace, the university could incorporate intensive Finnish language studies for international students for a year, after which they could proceed to their coursework. Likewise, international students could come together and use their entrepreneurial ideas to form a business instead of solely relying on applications sent to other companies for a job.

To improve the employability of international students, the university should have a database of graduate students and where they work and how to coach others to secure a job. Improvements to career counselling and guidance services at university could be carried out by having Finnish students and international students working together at the earliest stage of the degree program in order to learn from each other. Also, international students have to network with companies to find hidden jobs that are available in their field of studies. It is also important for international students to gain work experience in their field of study before graduation.

6 CONCLUSION

International business students (international students) often face difficulties in Finland in securing a job after the completion of studies. In order to break into the labour market, it is therefore important for international business students to create opportunities and competencies that will connect them with employers and professionals who are prepared to hire graduates who can significantly contribute to their organizations. In a competitive working environment, managers frequently look at the capability of the candidate, ability to adapt, and ability to learn key competencies that the company is looking for in order to contribute to the company's achievement. The study focused on avenues that international business students should consider when looking at the job market as to what organizations want and the kind of skills that are needed. Also, to identify potential areas that need to be improved on through further self-development, mainly by acquiring skills or through professional training.

The study also took into consideration the students' perspective in addressing the research questions and objectives to find answers to the problems on how international business students can create opportunities in order to be employed after graduation. The thesis was based on the "Go Strong" project, as stated in the introductory chapter. Also, relevant theories relating to the study were used. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were adopted by the author to gather data through interviews and surveys from international business graduates and undergraduate students to aid in the analysis of results.

The findings demonstrate that competence development is essential for International Business students. Adapting to both a country's culture and that of the organization's plays a significant role in settling in a particular environment, not neglecting the laws of the country. Human Resource Departments of organizations have become more specific for applicants they employ into their organizations as it plays a leading role in the foreseeable future of the organization. Therefore, other skills are expected of the applicants, not only the university qualifications. Even though academic performance may be needed in some cases, it is not essential for most employers. Employers often look out for social skills and competence a candidate possesses. Moreover, the potential an employee can bring to the organization is more important to an employer.

The findings show that in order for international students to create opportunities and competencies to succeed in the respective job markets in Finland, language skills, technical skills, for instance, Information Technology (IT) skills, communication skills, how to adapt to the culture system, being productive, and other personal traits would help the students or graduates to gain employment. Technical skills are of course important in some cases but mostly the companies appreciate that the

employee is committed to working, committed to developing and able to learn and able to understand the core of their business, what is relevant. The study shows that one has to have some understanding about the Finnish working culture or the local business culture; this will enable the individual to translate his or her culture into the Finnish company in order to get their business running. For instance, if the company has subsidiaries in the individual's country because he or she understands both languages and the cultural system.

Comparing the theories, interviews, and surveys the author realized that, there is a typical pattern in the answers that were given by the interviewees and the survey respondents which has a link with the theories. The first interviewee suggested that Finnish language study is a key factor in getting a job in Finland whereas the second interviewee also mentioned Finnish language skills because, even though most people speak fluent English in Finland, the working culture is Finnish, and companies use Finnish as the working language. However, they also emphasized that IT skills are another factor in creating opportunities in the job market.

Most respondents to the survey presumed language skills; using popular job portals, for example, LinkedIn and other job search platforms; having knowledge about the Finnish job market; networking with companies at events and job fairs; Internships and student training to gain some preliminary working experience; communication; and attitude towards these skills were important factors in building competence and creating opportunities to find a job. In addition, the theory part also highlighted language as a factor in adopting the culture of the country and the organizations' culture in competence development and employability skills candidates must have.

From theory towards empirical research

This chapter summarizes the relevant theory that was used by the author in the study. The section reviewed how organizations use their human resource department in assessing applicants' competencies and skills during recruitment processes, enhancing competence development for international business students, and working experience and skills needed to be employed in Finland. The figure below illustrates the theoretical framework of the thesis.

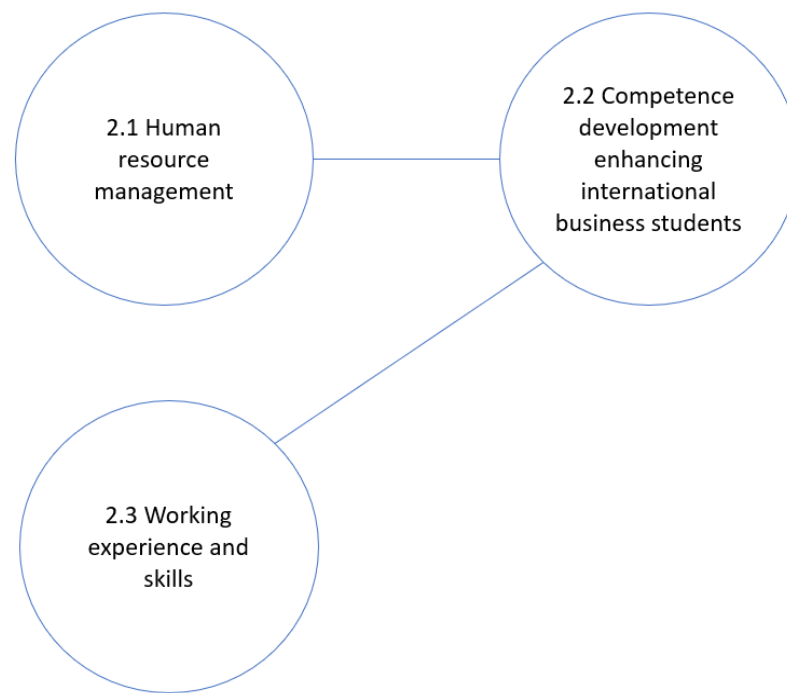


Figure 16. Theoretical Framework

The theory explained how the human resource department of an organization carries out its duties during recruitment, projects, and its management of the welfare of employees. The selection of applicants is done by using various recruitment procedures (internal and external) in order to select applicants who have the needed skills and competencies required on the job. However, due to the present business climate, most recruiters and managers lack patience in hiring and training university graduates but, instead, prefer professionals with technical and analytical skills in handling tasks assigned to them on the job. A few employers prefer to hire young and energetic graduates whom they can train and retain in their company for a longer time. And some of these organizations even partner with universities to help provide them with qualified graduates to fill vacant positions in the organization, which is one of the strategies used by companies to cut down the cost of recruitment.

Most organizations rely on their labour force and keen strategy towards business trends as their strength of survival; therefore, it would be of the utmost importance for international students to know how to position themselves using various platforms and career development events to get to know more about companies and the skills they require from candidates.

Subsequently, the second part of the theoretical framework explicates the development of competence on the job by having the ability to apply the skills in practice to suit the needs of the tasks being performed by the employee. International business undergraduates and graduates must develop their skills through various educational projects, events,

internships, and practical training in order to meet the current challenges in the job market because employers prefer to employ people who can add value to their organization. Also, being in tune with the country's culture makes it easy to learn the language. To be influenced by the culture, international business students ought to learn the Finnish language and try to communicate with the citizens to get to know the norms and values that are acceptable in the society. Furthermore, every organization has its own culture and knowing the operations of the organization would help a new employee to fit in.

Finally, the theory explains working experience and skills, throwing light on personal branding, employability skills, communication skills, and teamwork skills. Under the headings of working experience and skills, some essential factors such as analytical skills, tolerance and computer skills were reviewed. The chapter also talks about how international business students can develop themselves using available resources to create opportunities in order to meet companies' expectations because most employers do not really show concern about how the students excel in school. Instead they give more weight to the social competence and attitudes prospective employees have which can enable them to work in a competitive workplace and contribute effectively to an organization's goal.

Moreover, communication plays a vital role in being able to connect well with work colleagues and people from different backgrounds. Some companies take into account the communication skills of a candidate when hiring. Also, international business students often work in a group whilst in school, and this can help them develop their teamwork skills, which can be transferred into the workplace, especially when working on project groups.

Limitation of the study and future research

The thesis is limited to the participants of the Go Strong project within the Pirkanmaa Region and graduates of Häme University of Applied Sciences (HAMK); therefore, the sample size was based on the international business students (foreign) who took part in the events and career week. Also, the thesis concentrated on the students' perspective in finding solutions to breaking into the labour market in Finland.

The thesis concentrated on only international business students' employment situation in Finland. Future research could be carried out involving other areas of studies, not limiting it to one particular program and could cover all universities in Finland. Nonetheless, despite the problems and challenges encountered during this research work, the aims of this work were achieved.

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INTERVIEW

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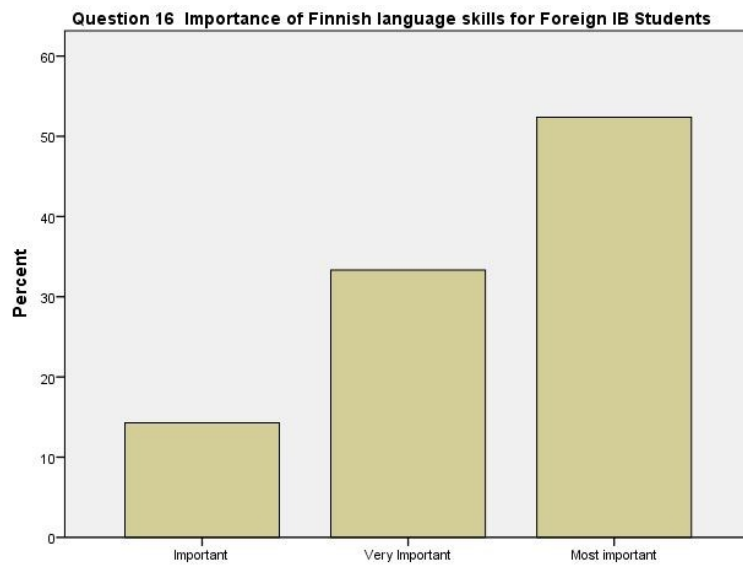


Figure 17. Language Skills

Academic performance

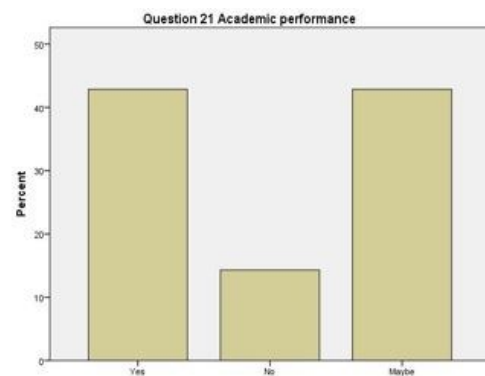
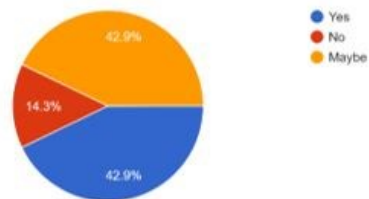


Figure 18. Academic Performance

Table 9. Attitude, motivation, and professionalism

Attitude and motivation					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	1	4.8	4.8	4.8
	Somewhat important	2	9.5	9.5	14.3
	Important	8	38.1	38.1	52.4
	Very much	10	47.6	47.6	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

Professional behaviour					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	2	9.5	9.5	9.5
	Somewhat important	2	9.5	9.5	19.0
	Important	11	52.4	52.4	71.4
	Very much	6	28.6	28.6	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

Table 10. Importance of competences and skills

Statistics									
		Building CV	How to find a job	Starting own business	LinkedIn and other tools	Knowledge about Finnish job market	Networking with companies	Attitude and motivation	Professional behaviour
N	Valid	21	21	21	21	21	21	21	21
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.0000	3.5714	3.3333	3.8571	4.3810	4.5238	4.2857	4.0000
Median		4.0000	4.0000	3.0000	4.0000	4.0000	5.0000	4.0000	4.0000
Mode		5.00	4.00	3.00	4.00	5.00	5.00	5.00	4.00
Std. Deviation		1.14018	1.02817	.91287	.96362	.66904	.87287	.84515	.89443
Skewness		-1.119	-.822	.113	-.802	-.626	-1.825	-1.166	-.927
Std. Error of Skewness		.501	.501	.501	.501	.501	.501	.501	.501

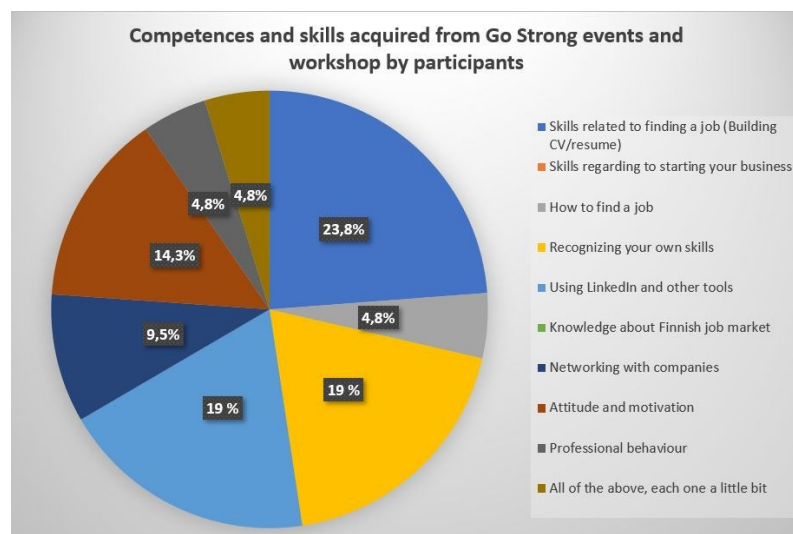


Figure 19. Competences and Skills

Table 11. Subcontracting Fair, Personal branding etc.

		Subcontracting Fair visit			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	1	4.8	5.6	5.6
	Not very important	1	4.8	5.6	11.1
	Somewhat important	2	9.5	11.1	22.2
	Important	7	33.3	38.9	61.1
	Very much	7	33.3	38.9	100.0
	Total	18	85.7	100.0	
Missing	System	3	14.3		
Total		21	100.0		

		Recognizing One's own Skills			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	2	9.5	11.8	11.8
	Somewhat important	4	19.0	23.5	35.3
	Important	11	52.4	64.7	100.0
	Total	17	81.0	100.0	
Missing	System	4	19.0		
Total		21	100.0		

		Personal branding & CV workshop			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	1	4.8	5.9	5.9
	Somewhat important	5	23.8	29.4	35.3
	Important	7	33.3	41.2	76.5
	Very much	4	19.0	23.5	100.0
	Total	17	81.0	100.0	
Missing	System	4	19.0		
Total		21	100.0		

Table 12. Career week, Growth and Internationalization etc.

		Career week			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not very important	3	14.3	15.0	15.0
	Somewhat important	3	14.3	15.0	30.0
	Important	5	23.8	25.0	55.0
	Very much	9	42.9	45.0	100.0
	Total	20	95.2	100.0	
Missing	System	1	4.8		
Total		21	100.0		

		Growth and Internationalization			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	1	4.8	8.3	8.3
	Not very important	1	4.8	8.3	16.7
	Somewhat important	2	9.5	16.7	33.3
	Important	3	14.3	25.0	58.3
	Very much	5	23.8	41.7	100.0
	Total	12	57.1	100.0	
Missing	System	9	42.9		
Total		21	100.0		

		Personal Consulting			
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	1	4.8	8.3	8.3
	Somewhat important	2	9.5	16.7	25.0
	Important	4	19.0	33.3	58.3
	Very much	5	23.8	41.7	100.0
	Total	12	57.1	100.0	
Missing	System	9	42.9		
Total		21	100.0		

Table 13. Offering advance courses, culture and language clubs etc.

Offering more courses

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	13	61.9	61.9	61.9
	No	8	38.1	38.1	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

Organizing culture and language clubs

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	13	61.9	61.9	61.9
	No	8	38.1	38.1	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

Providing optional advanced courses together with basic Finnish courses

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	13	61.9	61.9	61.9
	No	8	38.1	38.1	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

Organizing speaking club with Finns

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	13	61.9	61.9	61.9
	No	8	38.1	38.1	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

Workshop with Finnish students and work on projects

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	8	38.1	38.1	38.1
	No	13	61.9	61.9	100.0
	Total	21	100.0	100.0	

SURVEY ON "COMPETENCES NEEDED FOR INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS STUDENTS TO BE EMPLOYED IN FINLAND"

1. What is your gender? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Male
☐ Female
☐ Prefer not to say

2. What is your age? Select from the appropriate range below *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ 16 - 18
☐ 19 - 21
☐ 22 - 24
☐ 25 - 27
☐ 27+

3. What is your nationality? *

4. How important are these competences in getting a job in Finland? *

Mark only one oval per row.

	Not at all (1)	2	3	4	Very much (5)
Skills related to finding a job (Building CV/resume)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How to find a job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skills regarding to starting your business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using LinkedIn and other tools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge about Finnish job market	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Networking with companies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attitude and motivation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional behaviour	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

5. Did you participate in the Subcontracting Fair visit and if yes, what measure of these competences did you acquire on a scale of 1 to 5?

Mark only one oval per row.

	Not at all (1)	2	3	4	Very much (5)
Skills related to finding a job (Building CV/resume)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How to find a job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skills regarding to starting your business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using LinkedIn and other tools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge about Finnish job market	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Networking with companies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attitude and motivation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional behaviour	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Appendix 5/2

6. Did you participate in Recognizing One's own Skills –workshop and if yes, which of these competences did you acquire on a scale of 1 to 5?

Mark only one oval per row.

	Not at all (1)	2	3	4	Very much (5)
Skills related to finding a job (Building CV/resume)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How to find a job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skills regarding to starting your business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using LinkedIn and other tools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge about Finnish job market	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Networking with companies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attitude and motivation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional behaviour	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

7. Did you participate in Personal branding & CV –workshop and if yes, which of these competences did you acquire on a scale of 1 to 5?

Mark only one oval per row.

	Not at all (1)	2	3	4	Very much (5)
Skills related to finding a job (Building CV/resume)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How to find a job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skills regarding to starting your business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using LinkedIn and other tools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge about Finnish job market	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Networking with companies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attitude and motivation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional behaviour	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. Did you participate in Career Week and if yes, which of these competences did you acquire on a scale of 1 to 5?

Mark only one oval per row.

	Not at all (1)	2	3	4	Very much (5)
Skills related to finding a job (Building CV/resume)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How to find a job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skills regarding to starting your business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using LinkedIn and other tools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge about Finnish job market	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Networking with companies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attitude and motivation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional behaviour	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Appendix 5/3

9. Did you participate in Kasva ja Kansainvälisty "Growth and Internationalization" and if yes, which of these competences did you acquire on a scale of 1 to 5?

Mark only one oval per row.

	Not at all (1)	2	3	4	Very much (5)
Skills related to finding a job (Building CV/resume)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How to find a job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skills regarding to starting your business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using LinkedIn and other tools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge about Finnish job market	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Networking with companies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attitude and motivation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional behaviour	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. Did you participate in Personal consulting with Iris Humala or Johanna Siuro or Annaleena and if yes, which of these competences did you acquire on a scale of 1 to 5?

Mark only one oval per row.

	Not at all (1)	2	3	4	Very much (5)
Skills related to finding a job (Building CV/resume)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How to find a job	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Skills regarding to starting your business	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Using LinkedIn and other tools	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Knowledge about Finnish job market	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Networking with companies	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attitude and motivation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional behaviour	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. What valuable information did you get from HAMK alumni's and other speaker's presentations during the Go Strong events? *

12. Which of these competence(s) and skill(s) did you acquire from Go Strong events workshops? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Skills related to finding a job (Building CV/resume)
- ☐ Skills regarding to starting your business
- ☐ How to find a job
- ☐ Recognizing your own skills
- ☐ Using LinkedIn and other tools
- ☐ Knowledge about Finnish job market
- ☐ Networking with companies
- ☐ Attitude and motivation
- ☐ Professional behaviour
- ☐ Other: _____

13. Did you get any other competence(s) or skill(s) during the Go Strong events? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Option 1

14. How can HAMK help international business students to develop competences and skills? Explain your answer briefly. *

15. How can the competences gain in HAMK help students with getting a job(s) in Finland? *

16. How important are Finnish language skills for international business students? *

Mark only one oval.

	1	2	3	4	5	
Least important	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	Most important

17. In your opinion, how can HAMK offer more support for the students in building their Finnish language skills? *

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Offering more courses
- ☐ Organizing culture and language clubs
- ☐ Workshop with Finnish students and work on projects
- ☐ Providing optional advance courses together with basic Finnish courses
- ☐ Organizing speaking club with Finns
- ☐ Other: _____

Appendix 5/5

18. How can international business students develop their Finnish language skills in Finland? *

19. What are the biggest challenges in finding a job in Finland? *

Check all that apply.

- ☐ Language as a tool
- ☐ Competition
- ☐ Working experience
- ☐ Role of the universities
- ☐ Employer attitude
- ☐ Networking
- ☐ Other: _____

20. How can international business students create opportunities to find a job in Finland? *

21. In your opinion, do academic performance matter to employers in Finland? *

Mark only one oval.

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe